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DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.

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Daniel. McClise

Drawn in Oct. 1829

London

A

MEMOIR

OF

DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.

BY

W. JUSTIN O'DRISCOLL, M.R.I.A

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

23072

'*Emigravit* is the inscription on the tombstone where he lies:
Dead he is not—but departed—FOR THE ARTIST NEVER DIES.'

Longfellow.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1871.

ERRATA.

At p. 34,	line 16,	*for*	'Horne's'	*read*	'Home's'
„ 25, in *note*	„ 5	„	'steering a'	„	'steering his'
„ 61	„ 18	„	'Joachims'	„	'Iachimos'
„ 79	„ 1	„	'characters'	„	'character'

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PREFACE.

It is with unaffected diffidence that I present this Memoir to the public. Engaged in the practice of a laborious profession, and long unaccustomed to literary work, I should, under ordinary circumstances, have shrunk from the task I have endeavoured to accomplish. But, as one of the very few persons, now living, whose familiar friendship with Maclise commenced in boyhood and continued without interruption to the period of his death, I thought it not impossible that my recollections of his earlier years might enable me to impart some interest to a record of his life. In the correspondence of an eminent man, we frequently find the pervading charm of his biography. There all his thoughts and feelings in their fresh and unfettered expression lie, as it were, mirrored before the reader. Through the kindness of Mrs. Banks—the sister of the artist—I have had unrestricted access to the correspondence addressed to him. I am not, however, in a position to avail myself of it in its entirety. It contains, for instance, a number of letters from the late Charles Dickens—brilliant, witty, and instructive, as might be antici-

pated—but for reasons which I unfeignedly respect, and which are, not improbably, connected with his own expressed wishes, it has not been considered by his executors desirable to publish them.

That Mr. Dickens was, himself, rather sensitive on this subject, may be inferred from the following letter, which I received from him a few days before his lamented death :—

'Gad's Hill Place, Higham by Rochester, Kent,
'Wednesday, May 18, 1870.

'My dear Sir,—I beg to assure you, in reply to your letter, that I have not one solitary scrap of the late Mr. Maclise's handwriting in my possession. A few years ago I destroyed an immense correspondence, expressly because I considered it had been held with me, and not with the public, and *because I could not answer for its privacy being respected when I should be dead.* I have since allowed no letters from friends to accumulate in my possession, and hence this disappointing answer to your request. The remarks I made at the Royal Academy dinner were reported with perfect accuracy in the "Times."

'My dear Sir, yours faithfully,

'Charles Dickens.

'*To* W. J. O'Driscoll.'

I have to express my cordial acknowledgments to Lady Eastlake for having given me permission to publish the correspondence of the late Sir Charles Eastlake with Maclise. I also desire to offer my

thanks to Mr. and Mrs. S. Carter Hall, Mr. Stephens of the 'Athenæum,' Mr. S. A. Hart, R.A., and Mr. Watson, of the 'Art Union,' for the assistance they have so kindly rendered me.

To Mr. John Forster I am under peculiar obligations. He generously placed at my disposal the letters addressed to him by Maclise from Naples, Paris, &c., which—with the characteristic sketches scattered through them—will, I presume to think, form an interesting feature in the work. The transactions of the Fine Arts Commissioners in reference to the wall-paintings at Westminster Palace have been extracted from the published reports. The works of the artist are referred to in chronological order, as they appeared in the annual exhibitions of the Royal Academy. The descriptions of the pictures I can scarcely call my own: they are epitomised in some instances, from contemporaneous notices and reviews, to be found in the pages of the 'Art Journal,' the 'Athenæum,' the 'Art Union,' &c.

So much for what I have attempted. Whether it remains an unaccomplished purpose, the fate of this little volume will determine—no one can entertain a more vivid sense of its imperfections than myself; but a great author has assured us that some enterprises may be laudable even when they transcend the capacity of those that undertake them.

W. J. O'D.

Mountjoy Square, Dublin:
April 1871.

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A MEMOIR

OF

DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.

CHAPTER I.

General Observations on Art in England before 1768—De Vernio—La Guerre—Sir James Thornhill—Hogarth—Fuseli—West—Reynolds—Theory of Montesquieu and Winckelmann refuted by Barry—Royal Academy established—Burch—Cosway—Nollekens—Shee—Mulready—Roberts, Petrie, O'Connor, and Danby leave Ireland—Their Adventure in Bristol—Sale of their Joint-stock Picture—Petrie and O'Connor return to Dublin—Danby arrives in London and enters the Royal Academy—Cork—Its artistic Memories—Fate of Artists who remained in Ireland—England's Encouragement of Literature and Art—Cork Artists—Butts—Grogan—His Two Sons—Clarke—Corbett—Efforts of the Citizens of Cork to establish Schools for Art Culture—Realization of the Project—Gift of Statuary Casts by Pope Pius VII. to George IV.—The King presents them to Cork—Revival of the Art follows in that City.

THE BIOGRAPHY of a great painter presents a far more extended field of thought and enquiry than would appear to be involved in the mere personal incidents of his career. It is so interwoven with the history and progress of the arts in the country that has recognised and rewarded his excellence, that if

we isolate the narrative within the sphere of his individual actions, or the works he has produced, it will be destitute of the most important and interesting features of such a life. This is universally true, and it is traceable to a variety of causes. In every clime where men have appeared who attained great eminence in either poetry, sculpture, or painting, it will be found that there pre-existed amongst its people an ardent love and appreciation of the arts, and a munificent liberality in developing and sustaining them. The correlative proposition is equally self-evident, that in every country where national encouragement is withheld or withdrawn from the cultivation of the arts, there will be a coincident dereliction of genius. The works of high art will, without doubt, be a reflex of public taste, and should excite and model it; but it cannot be denied that they are more frequently tributary to its influence. The history of art in England considered from a national point of view may be said to have been a blank until the institution of the Royal Academy by George III. Before that period the country produced some able painters; men who, by the sheer force of their talent, would have achieved distinction anywhere; but they appeared at long and irregular intervals. The majority of the artists of that time were unimpassioned imitators of those who preceded them; the public—whose taste lay very much in the direction of portraiture—were satisfied with the

merest mediocrity. There was nothing to influence the proper direction of art,—to elevate the standard of its excellence,—or to assert and maintain its true dignity, until the Royal Academy became a national institution. Sir James Thornhill was, perhaps, the first native painter that appeared in England with any degree of power in his art. He possessed great fertility of invention and facility of hand, but he injured his fame by following in the mystical foot-prints of La Guerre and Verrio, who would paint nothing but heathen divinities, allegorical goddesses, and nude nymphs; and he could not have acquired much fortune by his works, for it is recorded that he was paid for his decoration of the cupola of St. Paul's and the ceiling of Greenwich Hospital, at the munificent rate of 2*l.* per square yard. It was reserved for Hogarth, the son-in-law of Sir James Thornhill, to win back public taste from the dark and desert tracks into which it had wandered, and to substitute for allegorical absurdities, delineations of real life rendered with all the exquisite humour, sarcasm, and satire that have made his name immortal. West might have done much to elevate the art; the gates of the palace were opened to him, and he found in George III. a munificent patron. But West achieved very little for historical painting; his works were tinctured with a frigid mannerism, and pretentious feebleness; he wanted the grace and elegance of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the originality, vigour, and

invention of Barry. The first works that appeared in England calculated to awaken public taste and restore the antique spirit in art were the series of historical paintings executed by Barry in the great room of the Society of Arts. It will also be admitted that Sir Joshua Reynolds (as Lady Eastlake says) 'did more than any one else to vindicate the art of portrait painting as indigenous to our country,—he started it afresh from its lethargy, and recovered it from its errors.'[1]

England possessed some eminent painters long before 1768, the year in which the Royal Academy was inaugurated; but West and Fuseli had distinguished themselves—the former in America and the latter in Berlin—before they appeared in England. The art education of Barry and his high reputation were acquired altogether in Italy. As a proof of this it may be stated, that his great picture of 'Adam and Eve' was produced before he left Rome; and his exquisite works, 'Venus rising out of the Sea' and 'Jupiter and Juno,' were painted in 1770, the year he arrived in London. It is also beyond doubt that England failed to contribute a sufficient number of members for the incorporation of the Royal Academy at its opening; and it was not until 1772 that the required number (forty) was com-

[1] See 'Art of Dress,' an interesting essay from the pen of Lady Eastlake, published in 1852 by Murray, Albemarle Street; a reprint from the 'Quarterly Review.'

pleted by the addition of Barry, Burch, Cosway, and Nollekens.

Some writers of that period seriously advanced the hypothesis, that creative genius could only be eliminated by the cloudless skies and eternal sunshine of southern lands, and that the clime and capacity of England were unsuited and unequal to the development of high art. 'Winckelmann' and 'Montesquieu,' amongst others, sought by a train of sophistical reasoning to sustain this theory; but they were most effectually answered by Barry in his well-known work—'An Inquiry into the Real and Imaginary Obstructions to the Progress of Art in England.'

It is, however, incontrovertible, that a gloomy eclipse overshadowed the art in England until the institution of the Royal Academy illumined its prospects, and imparted a strong impetus to the progress of painting and sculpture.

For a considerable period after the Royal Academy was opened, the only Irishman it could reckon amongst its members was Barry; but, as has been stated, he had already won his high position in art. However, when the Academy began to vindicate the purposes of its existence, many distinguished Irishmen availed themselves of the facilities it presented for acquiring fame and fortune, which their own land could not offer them. Shee[1] and Mulready,

[1] Sir Martin Archer Shee obtained his art education in Dublin. He was possessed of considerable literary attainments, and was the author

Roberts and Danby,[2] all attained the honour of being elected academicians.

of several works of much merit. His tragedy of 'Alasco' brought him into some trouble. Its representation was interdicted by the Duke of Montrose (then lord chamberlain), on the ground that it advocated republican principles. For some years before his death his failing health interfered with the active discharge of his duties as president of the Royal Academy: he was succeeded by Sir Charles Eastlake, one of the most distinguished men that ever filled the president's chair.

[2] Danby was born in the county of Wexford in 1793; he entered the Royal Dublin Society's School of Art at an early age; he became an associate of the Royal Academy in 1825, and died February 10, 1861. The late Dr. Petrie, an eminent painter and antiquarian, has been frequently heard to relate the following anecdote:—'When Danby, O'Connor, and Petrie were students in Dublin, they determined to try their fortunes in London; and putting together all their earthly possessions (*i. e.* sketches and drawings), they proceeded to Bristol *en route*. When they arrived there the state of their finances presented serious difficulties to an extension of their journey, and their necessities forced them to adopt the expedient of offering some of their drawings for sale. One of the party went to the shop of an eminent printseller in Bristol with a few drawings. The gentleman looked at them, and was so impressed with their great merit, that he directly purchased them at a liberal price, and intimated his desire to buy any more that might be brought to him.' This circumstance generated an acquaintance with the young artists, and procured for Danby a commission to paint an oil picture for a nobleman living near Bristol, which he executed. In the meantime the three companions, as they had previously arranged to do, painted a kind of 'joint-stock picture' on a pretty large scale, each taking that part of the work for which he felt himself best qualified. O'Connor did the landscape and back-ground, Petrie finished some architectural ruins, and to Danby was allotted the figures and foreground. The picture was sold by them in Bristol, and the proceeds divided. O'Connor and Petrie returned to Dublin. Danby held to his original resolution and proceeded to London, where he speedily distinguished himself. Many years after this Petrie again visited Bristol, and was asked to dine with a gentleman who possessed some excellent pictures. He showed his collection to Petrie, and remarked, as to one, that although it was considered the best work in his gallery, no one could tell the name of the artist. The moment Petrie saw the picture he recognized it as the joint-

Before entering on a biographical sketch of the great artist, the subject of this memoir, whose brilliant career was so prematurely brought to a close, it may not be considered irrelevant to glance at the local conditions of the city that gave him birth, in reference to art-culture when he commenced his studies. Cork had, in common with other parts of our island, artistic traditions and memories of which she might justly be proud, but they were tinged with saddening reflections. The talent which Ireland produced appeared, from some inscrutable cause, to droop and decay until it was transplanted and became, as it were, an exotic in the land that gave it life. Poetry and painting were in the same ill-starred category. Authors and artists, those who had contributed to delight and adorn the age in which they lived, who wrought and toiled with an undying energy of genius, were permitted to pine under the influence of withered hopes and chilling neglect, and die, perhaps in poverty, unrequited save by posthumous honours—

> The splendid sorrows that adorn the hearse,

the unavailing reverence that cannot

> Soothe the dull cold ear of death.

The scenes of distress through which so many of our Irish artists have struggled form a disheartening

stock performance, and told its history to his host, who was rather disappointed at learning its hybrid origin.

retrospect. There are few amongst us who will not rejoice, that, in those instances referred to, where calm judgment has prevailed over the pardonable weakness of preferring fatherland with poverty, these misfortunes have been averted. England, with a truly noble and national spirit, affords encouragement to literature, science, and art. She fails not to cherish in life and to honour in death those who possess the indisputable stamp of genius, whether the produce of her own soil, or transplanted there from a less favoured land. The biographies of many of the townsmen of Maclise demonstrate that they would have acted more wisely if they too had sought in the sister-country that favour and fair field which was denied to them in their own. Barry, the friend of Burke and the contemporary and rival of Reynolds, whose magnificent pictures in the Society of Arts illustrating human culture have stamped him as one of the giants of his time, what could he have done—his ardent soul yearning for fame and dreaming of the Capella Sistina, of Angelo, Raphael and the great historic models—had he remained in his own country? Butts, an eminent landscape painter, buried his brilliant talents amid the dust and tinsel of a second-rate Dublin theatre, battling with the 'res angusta domi,' and extracting a miserable pittance from his efforts as a scene-painter. Grogan, a clever portrayer of common life,—more particularly in its humorous phases,—and as famous

for his skill in grotesques as Inigo Jones, lived in great poverty, engaged one-half of the day in the drudgery of teaching drawing, in order that he might devote the other half and part of the night to the unfettered study of the art which he loved so much. The same fate befell his two sons who were also artists; and Clarke and Corbett, painters of great merit, lived and died in neglect and indigence. These were all men of whom any country might be proud; but 'nemo propheta in patriâ.'[1] Where in the land of their birth are we to look for any memorials of their genius? Perhaps, indeed, a stray picture from their easels might be discovered hanging on the damp walls of some deserted gallery covered with cobwebs or decaying in damp.[2]

> No palms eternal flourish round their urn,
> To mark their graves and point us where to mourn;
> Obscure the spot, and uninscribed the stone,
> Leave their neglect and worth alike unknown.

---

[1] A distinguished Venetian artist (Hieronymus Colleo), of the sixteenth century, not finding himself appreciated in his own country—foreign and inferior painters being preferred to him—sought better fortune at the court of Madrid. But before setting out he painted upon a façade the figure of a horse, of which great encomiums in various works are all that remain; and to this he affixed as a motto, 'Nemo propheta in patriâ.'—Lanzi's 'Painting in Italy,' vol. ii. p. 187.

[2] When the committee of the Cork Exhibition, in 1852, desired to have some pictures by native artists, in the Fine Arts Gallery, the only one of Barry's works that could be found was an allegorical representation of George IV. as the patron saint of England, in an attitude of triumph, having overcome the Dragon. Vide the work of Mr. Maguire, M.P., descriptive of the Cork Exhibition in 1852, a most interesting

Notwithstanding these depressing influences, there still lingered amongst the citizens of Cork indelible evidences of an artistic taste. The name of James Barry was not forgotten, and his fame was enshrined in their recollections. From time to time various attempts were made to establish schools for the education of artists; but all these efforts were unavailing until the year 1822, when a felicitous accident placed within the reach of the citizens a medium for achieving that for which they had yearned so long and so fruitlessly.

In the conflict of the first Napoleon with England and her allies, the important services rendered to Pope Pius VII. made a deep impression on His Holiness, and, in testimony of his gratitude to England, he presented George IV. (then Prince Regent) with a superb collection of casts from all the celebrated marbles of antiquity then in Rome. The 'Apollo Belvidere,' the 'Medici Venus,' the 'Laocoon,' the 'Dying Gladiator,' the 'Antinous,' and many others of equal sublimity in ancient art. To render the gift worthy of the object, the Pope commanded Canova to superintend the preparation of these casts. They were transmitted to London, and arrived there in the year 1818. It is said the Prince Regent thought so little of these works that they

book, and written with consummate ability. There is a good picture by Barry, at present hanging in an obscure spot in one of the rooms of the Royal Dublin Society. The design is from Shakspeare's 'Cymbeline;' it was presented to the society by Mr. George Evans.

were permitted to remain for a considerable time at the London Custom House, performing a kind of ignoble quarantine in their unopened cases. After awhile they were to be found surrounding the interior base of the large tent room in the gardens of Carlton Palace. They appeared to have been so very much in the way *there* that the Prince Regent indicated to the members of the Royal Academy his desire that they should possess them; but that body was constrained to decline the offer as a sufficient space could not be found for them. This having become known to the late Earl of Listowel—himself a distinguished patron of the fine arts, and whose gallery contained some of the finest pictures in this country—that nobleman waited on his Royal Highness, and solicited the casts for the citizens of Cork. The request was readily and generously complied with, and they were immediately afterwards transmitted to their destination. The gift of this splendid collection, like the myrtle which Minerva presented to the Athenians, induced a love of the art to revive and strike deep root amongst the people of Cork. By their exertions, and very much by their liberal subscriptions, a theatre was fitted up for the reception of the casts and the admission of students, and it was placed under the superintendence of a competent master.

CHAPTER II.

Academy for Study of Fine Arts opened in Cork—Hogan—Forde—His Cartoon, 'Fall of the Rebel Angels'—Description of the Picture—The fate of Forde—His early death—Daniel Maclise—His birth—His Family—His early Education—Extraordinary skill in Drawing when a Boy—He enters the Academy at Cork—His Acquaintance with Richard Sainthill—Crofton Croker—Extent of Maclise's reading—His Illustrations of the Fairy Legends of Ireland—Dr. Woodrooffe's School of Anatomy—Maclise attends Lectures, and acquires a knowledge of Anatomy.

THE Academy was opened in the city of Cork in the year 1822, and then, indeed, commenced the golden period of the Cork school of art. Hogan, who attained unrivalled fame as a sculptor, studied in this institution. It was in drawing from the glorious models there, that he attained the classical purity of conception and the ineffable grace and grandeur which pervade all his works. Here Forde, whose brilliant career was terminated almost in boyhood, acquired his knowledge of the elementary principles of art. It was in the presence of these incarnations of the grand and beautiful that his genius received its first inspirations. Here he attained that wonderful skill in drawing and chiaroscuro which characterizes his unfinished cartoon, 'The Fall of the Rebel

Angels,' and here his fervid imagination foreshadowed to him,

> The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar;

an eminence his transcendent talents would have surely reached, if death had not laid its icy hand on him at the early age of twenty. The passage in Milton which the cartoon is designed to illustrate is the following:—

> Him the Almighty Power
> Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
> With hideous ruin and combustion, down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In adamantine chains and penal fire.

This work is in the possession of the Earl of Shannon. It exhibits singular power of conception, and breadth and boldness of drawing. There is something approaching to sublimity in the mode in which the mass of grand and terrible figures—the host of Satan—are represented as driven from the portals of heaven by the weapons of their celestial victors.

The subject of this memoir was, for a short time, the fellow-student of Forde in the Cork Academy; but the pressure of pecuniary difficulties forced the latter to abandon his studies there, and commence that unequal contest with fortune which brought him prematurely to the grave.

Daniel Maclise was born in Cork on January 25th, 1811. His father was a respectable tradesman in that city. In some letters, published after his death,

in the local daily papers, his birth is attributed to the year 1806, and of which it is stated, on most respectable authority, a record appears in the parish register. However this may be, and it is really an unimportant matter, it is most certain that the artist himself frequently stated to his friends, that he was born in 1811. In notices of his works and sketches of his life, which appeared from time to time under the sanction of his authority, the same statement is repeated. It will also be remembered that the name, age, &c., of a student presenting himself for admission to the Royal Academy are regularly recorded in the books of the institution. Maclise appears to have been admitted in the year 1828, and it is not easy to understand how a young man twenty-two years old could successfully represent himself to the council of the Academy as a lad of sixteen.

He had three brothers—Joseph, Alexander, and William; and two sisters—Isabella and Anna. Joseph became a surgeon, and attained considerable eminence in London. He published a very able work on physiology, illustrated with a series of coloured anatomical drawings. William entered the army as a surgeon in the 90th regiment of Foot, from which he exchanged into the 23rd. He accompanied his regiment to the Crimea, and his exertions there so undermined his constitution, that he died shortly after his return to England. Alexander and Joseph

are still living. Maclise's sisters were eminently handsome girls: those who knew them in their youth could find no difficulty in recognizing their likenesses in many of the beautiful female faces scattered through the works of their brother.[1]

Anna (the younger sister) married Mr. Perceval Weldon Banks, a member of the English bar, and well known in the literary world as a distinguished contributor to Fraser's 'Magazine' and other periodicals. Isabella was never married; she loved her brother so intensely that nothing would induce her to separate from him. She died in the latter part of 1865, and her death had a most depressing effect on his health and spirits. Maclise was placed, at an early age, in the school of a gentleman famous for having educated some of the best classical and science scholars of his time. When little more than a child, he manifested in what direction his talents lay. He excited the delight and astonishment of his schoolfellows by the pen and ink sketches with which he adorned their copy-books, and the wonderful facility with which he could dash off a queer face, or an irreverent caricature of the master. Some of these sketches, which are still in existence, exhibit the rudiments of future excellence. He left school when scarcely fourteen years old, and was placed in

[1] The pictures of 'All Hallow Eve,' 'The Installation of Captain Rock,' 'Malvolio and the Countess,' contain portraits of the artist's sisters.

the banking-house of the Messrs. Newenham, where he remained but a very short time. He was even then far from deficient in classical acquirements. He had read Shakspeare and Milton, Spencer and Chaucer, as well as many of the modern English poets and dramatists—history and romances, tales of chivalry, and legends of his own land. When he resolved to enter the Academy as an art student, he was conscious that the education which we fail to acquire in youth is very rarely attained in riper years, and that the undisciplined efforts of a later period of life will not avail to retrieve the loss of those first precious moments whose susceptibility of instruction can never return. The lectures of Reynolds and Fuseli, of Barry and Opie, which he had read and remembered, convinced him that the artist, without the light of learning, however conspicuous his natural powers or undoubted his genius, can never reach any eminence in his profession,—will find himself distanced in the race of fame,—and be, at best, a servile imitator and copyist of others.[1] Maclise continued to work perseveringly in the Academy, where he made rapid and brilliant progress. His wonderful skill of hand attracted the notice of the late Mr. Sainthill, a lover of the fine arts, and a most learned antiquary; he perceived that the drawings of the

[1] To form an estimate of his literary attainments, and the extent of his reading, see the observations of his friend Charles Dickens at the Royal Academy Dinner. Maclise was the author of several essays on the subject of the Fine Arts, written with conspicuous ability.

boy bore the impress of unquestionable genius, and in this amiable gentleman Maclise found an ardent and influential friend. He had access to the library of Mr. Sainthill, which was filled with antiquarian and legendary literature, and through him Maclise first became acquainted with the late Thomas Crofton Croker, the accomplished author of the 'Fairy Legends of Ireland,' and many other well-known works, and whose warm and unswerving friendship for Maclise exercised a not unimportant influence on the earlier period of his career. Mr. Croker published the first edition of the 'Legends' in 1825. Maclise, who was then a frequent guest at Mr. Sainthill's, saw with that gentleman a presentation copy, and he at once commenced those exquisite illustrations which appear in the second edition. These sketches were executed in pen and ink,[1] as well as those with which he subsequently illustrated several other works by the same author. The late Dr. Woodrooffe, one of the most famous surgeons of his time, had a school of anatomy in Cork, to which Maclise and other students of the Academy were gratuitously admitted. He attended the lectures there and occasionally dissected; and this early discipline of his hand and eye in the science of anatomy, con-

[1] Maclise invented for himself a preparation, composed of Indian ink and some other chemical ingredients, which was peculiarly effective in these sketches; it possessed all the softness, and facility in working, of Indian ink, without the peculiar yellow hue to which the latter degenerates after a time.

tributed very much to produce that marvellous facility and accuracy in delineating the human figure which imparts such a charm and grace to all his works. Whilst pursuing unremittingly his studies from the models in the Academy, and attending regularly the lectures of Dr. Woodrooffe, his pencil was incessantly occupied in every imaginable way. Whenever he saw a grotesque face or figure, a picturesque tree, or a beautiful landscape, it was at once transferred to his portfolio, and scores of his sketches were distributed with a profuse hand to his friends.[1] Amongst others of his 'juvenilia' he transformed a pack of ordinary playing-cards into a set of clever caricatures: they were executed with pen and ink, and are full of life and genuine humour. The tide of fashion, ever varying and capricious in its course, ran at that time so strongly in the direction of portraiture,—the public encouraging only that branch of the art which ministered to personal vanity,—that the painter who had the boldness to devote all his energies to the historical style would have found himself in the predicament of Barry. Still, if Maclise were even then permitted to yield to

[1] In some of the biographical notices of Maclise it is stated, that 'he sold these sketches to his schoolfellows and others.' This is an egregious mistake: he never sold a sketch until he made painting his profession. Whilst a mere boy he appeared at a masquerade held in the Cork theatre, in the character of an itinerant artist with a portfolio slung behind him: he dashed off sketches and profile portraits on the spot, for which he was paid, and he handed the entire proceeds, which were not inconsiderable, to a charity.

the instincts of his genius, he would have followed in the footsteps—and probably experienced the fate—of that great artist. However, one of those felicitous opportunities—which fortune not infrequently offers to genius, and of which genius alone can fully and triumphantly avail itself—occurred, which determined the direction of his talents.

CHAPTER III.

Sir Walter Scott, Lockhart, and Miss Edgeworth at Cork in 1825—Sir Walter visits the Shop of Bolster the Bookseller—Maclise makes Pen and Ink Sketches of him there—One is lithographed—Its Success and rapid Sale—He opens an Atelier in Patrick Street, Cork—Executes Portraits in Pencil—He makes an Excursion on Foot through the County of Wicklow—Sketches made on the Journey—An Adventure—He returns to Cork and resumes his Labours—His Prices for Portraits are increased—His Evening Occupations—An amusing Adventure—Maclise is urged to proceed to London—He visits Tipperary, Holycross, and the Rock of Cashel—He executes a Picture for Somerset House—He resolves to leave Cork for London in 1827—Enters the Royal Academy as a Student—Crofton Croker's friendly exertion for Maclise on his arrival.

In the autumn of 1825 Sir Walter Scott made a hasty tour of Ireland, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart and Miss Edgeworth. Amongst other places he stayed a short time at Cork, and, whilst there, he visited the establishment of Mr. Bolster, an eminent bookseller. The presence of the illustrious author attracted crowds of literary persons there. Maclise, then a mere boy, conceived the idea of making a sketch of Sir Walter, and having placed himself unobserved in a part of the shop which afforded him an admirable opportunity, he made in a few minutes three outline sketches, each in a different

position. He brought them home, and having selected that one which he considered the best, worked at it all night, and next morning brought to Bolster a highly finished pen and ink drawing, handled with all the elaborate minuteness of a line engraving. Bolster placed it in a conspicuous part of his shop, and Sir Walter with his friends having again called during the day, it attracted his attention when he entered. He was struck with the exquisite finish and fidelity of the drawing, and at once inquired the name of the artist who had executed it. Maclise, who was standing in a remote part of the shop, was brought forward and introduced to Sir Walter. The great author took him kindly by the hand, and expressed his astonishment that a mere boy could have achieved such a work, and predicated that he would yet distinguish himself. Sir Walter then asked for a pen, and wrote with his own hand 'Walter Scott,' at the foot of the sketch.[1]

[1] It is related of Barry that when a mere boy he performed a journey from Cork to Dublin, on foot, with his first picture ('The Conversion of the Pagan Prince by St. Patrick'). It was placed in a remote corner of one of the Exhibition rooms, where it was unlikely that any eye would rest upon it. It did not, however, escape the observation of the great Edmund Burke: he enquired of the secretary the name of the painter. 'I don't know,' said that gentleman, 'but it was brought here by that little boy'—pointing to Barry, who was modestly standing near his work. 'Where did you get this picture, my boy?' said Burke; 'who painted it?' —'It is mine,' said the proud boy; 'I painted it.'—'Oh! that is impossible,' said Burke, glancing at the poorly-clad youth. Barry burst into tears and rushed from the room. Burke instantly followed him, soothed him with kind and encouraging words, and was ever after his friend.

Maclise was advised by Mr. Bolster to have it lithographed. That branch of art was only then in its infancy. There was no lithographic press in Cork, and but *one* in Dublin. Maclise himself prepared the tracings for transferring the drawing to the slate. Five hundred copies were struck off and were sold as rapidly as they were printed. One of these original sketches, with the study in oils for the 'Spirit of Justice,' and some early drawings of the artist, were to be seen in the National Exhibition at Cork in 1852.[1]

This little sketch of Sir Walter Scott created such a sensation amongst art critics and the public, that Maclise, not without great reluctance and diffidence on his part, was induced by his friends to open an *atelier* in Patrick Street. He attained at once full practice for his pencil, commissions for portraits flowed in upon him, and his rooms were crowded with sitters. His first price for a pencil drawing (portrait) was a guinea and a half; the size about 9 inches by 7. His method of working was this: he fully finished the head and outlined the figure in two sittings of about one hour each, and he devoted his evenings and many hours of the night to handling in the background and details. The style in which these portraits were executed was

[1] See Mr. Maguire's book, containing a catalogue and detailed description of all the productions of science, art, and industry exhibited at Cork in 1852.

novel and remarkable. The accessories were all so minutely wrought as to present the appearance of what is in the present day produced by the photographic process. His skill of hand and rapidity of execution enabled him to produce one of these portraits in a comparatively short time; but the system involved such an enormous amount of mere mechanical labour, each lady or gentleman sitter being anxious to have her or his own selection of a background, that, when his time became of more consequence, and the number of his sitters increased, he wholly discarded the elaborate backgrounds, which became as tedious and distasteful to him as the straw-yards to George Morland.[1] He thenceforth adopted the vignette style of finishing his portraits; the effect was infinitely better, and the manual labour vastly decreased. The summer of 1826 afforded him a short respite from the incessant and monotonous toil of portraiture. He made a sketching tour in the month of July, accompanied by a friend, altogether on foot, through the county of Wicklow. He was charmed with the exquisite scenery of that country, its legendary haunts, and fairy dells; and, as he traversed its romantic glens and ascended its lofty mountains, every scene of

[1] 'The painting of a straw-yard had evidently cost him some pains; he accordingly introduced a raven seated on a straw-rack, and wrote on the rail under its feet, "No more straw-yards for me, George Morland."'—*Vide* Allan Cunningham's 'Lives of the Painters.'

beauty and grandeur that met his eye was transferred to his portfolio.[1]

On his return to Cork he resumed his labours in portraiture, and at the same time he read and sketched with unwearying assiduity. As his marvellous skill of hand became every day more extensively known and conspicuous, men of genius, wealth, and eminence were to be found in his atelier sitting for their portraits, or glancing over the last creations of his magical pencil. Drawing was then the business of his life. His enthusiasm for art subdued every other thought, and yet he contrived to steal moments from the easel which were appropriated to lighter pursuits—music and athletic exercises. He received

[1] Maclise and his friend having determined to avoid the public roads and proceed by devious paths across and through the most picturesque parts of Wicklow, provided themselves with a map of the county, and marked out their route upon it. The distances were most inaccurately laid down on the map; and one evening, after a walk of over twenty miles, having rested themselves at a little hotel near the 'Seven Churches,' they commenced an ascent of the mountain, which overhangs

'that lake,
Whose gloomy shore
Skylark never warbles o'er,'

and forms the stupendous barrier that separates it from the valley of 'Glenmalure.' The map gave promise of their arriving at the little village of 'Drumgoff' about sunset. The sun went down, and the moon rose up, and they still found themselves toiling up the face of the mountain, the summit of which they did not reach until far past midnight. They then discerned by the moonlight the village of Drumgoff,—and its little hostelry at the foot of the mountain,—still more than four miles distant; and they were compelled, through sheer fatigue and the impossibility of proceeding, to lie down on the heather, and there remain until sunrise.

lessons on the Spanish guitar from an old Italian named Fabri, and acquired considerable proficiency on that instrument. Fabri conceived a great affection for his pupil, and persistently refused to accept any remuneration. He was, however, more than amply repaid by having his attenuated figure sketched in every conceivable attitude that his vanity suggested. About this period some young associates of Maclise got up a gymnasium in Cork, and he practised there. He was then a singularly fine and muscular lad, and rather famous for feats of agility and strength. Many of his leisure moments were passed on board the yacht of his friend J. L., and, as the little craft, wafted by the evening breeze, glided down the river Lee, Maclise might be seen sitting in the stern with pencil in hand, transferring to his portfolio sketches of the charming scenery with which the banks of that beautiful river so abound.[1]

[1] An egregious coxcomb, named R., was the owner of a yacht called the 'Gazelle.' He was extremely vain of her graceful build and her sailing qualities. She was moving down the river one evening with her owner at the helm, and in all the pride of a new coat of paint, for the regatta which was to take place next day. Maclise was steering a friend's yacht, and by some accident the boats came into contact. Mr. R. became exceedingly rude and uncivil. He insisted that the accident was caused by the steering of Maclise, who, he said, 'knew no more about a paint-brush than a rudder.' Maclise was resolved to make reprisal in an appropriate way. Accompanied by —— he proceeded at night in his friend's punt, armed with two pots of paint and brushes, to the part of the river where the gay 'Gazelle' lay at her moorings. He got under the stern, and having deliberately painted it over with a coat of white, obliterating the name 'Gazelle,' he drew on the stern the figure of a tortoise in black paint, placing under it the words 'Le Noir Fainéant.' Mr. R.,

Up to this period his plans for the future had not assumed any definite form. His friends (Sir Thomas Deane and Mr. Sainthill) earnestly urged him to proceed to London, and endeavour to enter as a student in the schools of the Royal Academy. Mr. Croker expressed his opinion that he should adopt that course, and promised him—the not unimportant advantage to one so young and inexperienced,—his friendly aid and influence; but Maclise thought the experiment just then would involve too serious a risk, and he resolved to remain in Cork until he had acquired such a sum as would render him independent of the consequences of a failure in his first effort to attain the studentship. His friends met this objection by generously offering to sustain him in London until he had achieved his own position. The offer, however, was declined. He had formed an early determination never to accept pecuniary aid from any human being under any circumstances; a resolution to which he proudly and unswervingly adhered; and in this he did not, perhaps, act unwisely for his fame.

wholly unconscious of what had taken place, got his yacht under weigh next morning and sailed down the river, her white canvas set, and a gaudy pennant flying from her masthead. When he arrived amongst the other boats, the ludicrous figure on the stern attracted the attention of every one, and excited great merriment. At length Mr. R. discovered what had occurred; great and stormy was his indignation, and he uttered threats of vengeance on the person who disfigured his boat. Maclise, who was in his friend's yacht beside the 'Gazelle,' said to Mr. R., 'I hope you are now convinced that I can use the paint-brush.' Mr. R. thought he had been made sufficiently ridiculous, and there the matter ended.

Although he had then (the autumn of 1826) raised the price of his three-quarter length portraits to five guineas, his commissions multiplied beyond his power to execute them. He then, indeed, began to feel that his pencil was a talisman of fortune in his hands; and the dream of possessing what would justify him in removing to London was approaching realisation.

In the latter part of the autumn of 1826 he made an engagement to take the portraits of a family of distinction in the county of Tipperary. He proceeded there in the month of September, and remained away but a few days. He contrived, however, before he returned, to visit the celebrated ruins of the Abbey of Holycross and the Rock of Cashel, and enrich his portfolio with a series of beautiful sketches, many of which were skilfully applied in making up the backgrounds of some of his best pictures. If, in addition to his finished portraits,—the rough and crude designs for large pictures,—illustrations of literary works, and sketches of rural life and scenery made by him during the autumn and winter of 1826, were brought together, it would appear simply marvellous that one hand could have executed them all. It is not easy to conjecture where these fragments of genius flung from his facile fingers now lie scattered: they would certainly form an interesting retrospect of his earlier efforts if they could be collected.[1]

[1] As an instance of the alacrity with which he could seize upon any-

During the winter of 1825, and part of the spring of 1826, he devoted many hours of the morning and night to finishing a large and highly wrought drawing intended for Somerset House whenever he should determine to become a candidate for admission there. Mr. Sainthill transmitted it to London, with a letter to Mr. Crofton Croker. It was placed by the latter gentleman in the Exhibition, and attracted very much attention: it was considered an extraordinary production for a lad of his years. Mr. Sainthill thus writes to Mr. Croker:—

'Cork, March 20, 1826.

'My dear Crofton,—Maclise sends a pencil drawing as candidate for admission to Somerset House. It will be framed and glazed, therefore will only require you to put your residence on the back of it,

thing humorous or grotesque, the following anecdote may be given:—'Maclise and the writer were in the habit of making excursions on Sundays along the banks of the river Lee, and through the beautiful country stretching beyond the ruins of Carrigrohan Castle. He had a boy who attended his painting rooms, and this "Mercury" was generally sent on before with a small basket containing some edibles for the day. One morning the boy was pursued by a bull, which was grazing on the river bank, and finding no other medium of escape he ran into the water, and there remained until we came up and found him in this predicament. The scene was sufficiently ludicrous: there was the urchin, up to his arm-pits in the river, holding the basket on his head and looking the picture of terror, whilst the bull, with outstretched head and legs, and most minacious gravity, stood watching him. I proposed that we should go to the owner of the animal who lived near, and request him to release the boy. "Stop," said Maclise, "until I make a sketch:" and he produced in a few minutes a most admirable drawing of the group, which he used on a subsequent occasion when illustrating a pack of playing cards.'

and send it to Somerset House at the proper time, which, I suppose, will be the latter end of next week. I have written to Wyon requesting, as these matters are more in his way, that he would take as much trouble off your hands as possible; and if you would enclose my letter to him with a line from yourself, fixing a time and place for meeting, you could easily arrange matters. I should hope, after the Exhibition, you might be able to sell the drawing, which we consider as possessing great merit, and as justifying the interest you have manifested for Maclise. He was to have sent another with forest scenery, but the demands on him have not allowed him time. He has taken rooms in Patrick Street, corner of Princes Street, where his studio is well attended. If Maclise's drawing gains admittance, don't forget sending us a catalogue.

'Yours,

'R. SAINTHILL.'

The object of acquiring what he deemed sufficient to warrant him in proceeding to London, and which was floating incessantly before his eyes, was at length accomplished, and the consciousness of it came with promise on its wings to the anxious spirit of the young artist. In the spring of 1827 he resolved on leaving Cork to prosecute his studies in London. The drawing which was sent to Somerset House had secured his admission to the Royal Academy as

a student. Mr. Sainthill thus writes to Crofton Croker:—

'Cork, July 10, 1827.

'My dear Crofton,—Maclise will leave this next Tuesday for London, *viâ* Bristol. I shall direct him to you in the first instance, as it is an awful thing for a youngster to be dropt in the wilderness of London. You may, therefore, expect to see him at the Admiralty in due course, unless he makes Portsmouth his way round. This will depend on circumstances.

'Yours, &c. &c.,

'RICHARD SAINTHILL.'

He again writes to Crofton Croker the following letter:—

'Cork, July 16, 1827.

'My dear Crofton,—This will be handed to you by Maclise, who has at last mustered courage to act for himself; and I rely on your good offices to assist him. I am sure you are as much inclined as myself to give him a helping hand. I may say in a word his object is to get employment (at his pencil) so as to enable him to study at the Royal Academy.

'The first thing for him to do is to get himself cheap lodgings, and to learn how he may live on a frugal plan, as his resources are not very strong. Let him then see what will be interesting to an artist in London; and, while he is doing this, he may

meet with what he wants. This is what strikes me, and he takes letters to Leslie, Mr. Bagley of the "Sun," Conway, and Wyon; also to every friend I have who may have a chance of serving him, Le Reux, &c. He knows *Sam. Hall*, who called on him last week, but he was in the country.

'Yours,

'R. SAINTHILL.'

Maclise arrived in London on July 18, 1827,[1] and immediately afterwards entered the schools of the Royal Academy. He took apartments in Newman Street (Oxford Street), and sedulously devoted himself to his studies. It is somewhere said that 'those who befriend genius when it is struggling for distinction, befriend the world, and their names should be held in remembrance.' That Crofton Croker exerted himself at this supreme moment of the young artist's career to make his talents known to

[1] He had made a very fine full-length pencil drawing of a lady, to which he devoted an extraordinary amount of his time. It was one of his most finished efforts. For some reason never explained, it was not paid for; and it remained in his studio until the eve of his departure from Cork. The husband of the lady was communicated with, but he declined to receive it. Maclise was too proud to insist on payment, as he might have done; but he resolved to render it a medium for the display of his peculiar powers over the pencil. Slightly obliterating the prominent parts of the face, but preserving the exquisite outline, he contrived to envelope the face and bust in a delicately-wrought veil. It was a marvel of art. The fine figure and face were discernible through the folds of the veil, but every feature of resemblance was wholly destroyed. This 'Veiled Lady' was for some time in his studio in London; it was afterwards sold at a considerable price.

persons of distinction and influence, it would be treasonable to the memory of both not to mention. But it is equally true that Maclise resolutely retained his determination not to accept the slightest pecuniary favour from any human being. Crofton Croker, however, was then possessed of very much influence in the literary world, and his house was the resort of the most distinguished writers of that period: Moore and Rogers, Miss Edgeworth, Barham (the author of the 'Ingoldsby Legends'), Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall (who had quite as much influence in the literary world, and as generously accorded it to the artist), Jerdan (the well-known editor of the 'Literary Gazette'), Miss Landon (L. E. L.), Theodore Hook, Planche, Father Prout (Mahony), Sam. Lover, and many others. These celebrities were all, from time to time, the guests of Crofton Croker and Mr. and Mrs. Hall. Maclise made the acquaintance of many of them. Mrs. Croker was the daughter of the famous Nicolson (the father of the British school of water-colour painters). She was a very charming and accomplished person, and her talents very much enhanced the attractions of her home. Maclise was not particularly anxious just then to accept commissions in portraiture,—he certainly did not make any exertions to obtain them. A circumstance, however, occurred, which brought his talents into prominent notice, and gave him thenceforth full employment for his pencil.

CHAPTER IV.

Charles Kean makes his appearance on the London Stage as Norval—Maclise executes a Sketch of him, which is Lithographed—Its success—He obtains a Medal at the Royal Academy—Then the Gold Medal for 'The Choice of Hercules,' in 1829—Letter to Dr. MacEvers—Maclise refuses the Travelling Studentship—His First Pictures at the Royal Academy—'Twelfth Night'—Description of the Work—Parties at Mrs. S. C. Hall's and Jerdan's—Theodore Hook—Croker—Maclise exhibits seven Pictures at the Royal Academy: 'The Trysting Place,' 'A First Sitting,' 'Isabella's Favourite,' 'Portrait of Mrs. S. C. Hall,' 'H. R. H. The Princess Sophia,' 'L. E. L.,' 'Thomas Campbell'—Maclise visits Paris—Illness compels him to return to England—His first Acquaintance with Mr. John Forster—Their Intimate Friendship—He exhibits 'The Sleeping Page,' 'Viscount Castlereagh,' 'Miss Hardwicke,' 'Puck Disenchanting Bottom,' 'Mrs. Bellasis,' 'Mr. and Mrs. Macgregor,' 'Mrs. Wood.'

THE late Charles Kean, who was born in the same year with Maclise, made his *début* in London as an actor in the year 1827. The circumstances under which he was compelled to adopt the stage as a profession invested his first appearance with no ordinary degree of interest. It was well known that the elder Kean had, by a career of most illimitable extravagance, reached a point of pecuniary embarrassment that made it impossible for his son to remain at Eton; and the latter found himself, at the age of sixteen, forced to the alternative of ac-

cepting a cadetship in a foreign corps, or trying his fortune on the stage. His own inclinations would have induced him to prefer the army; but on his arrival in London, whither he had been summoned by his father, he found his mother in an obscure lodging, deserted and in poverty; and this circumstance at once determined him to remain with her and try the stage as a means of their mutual support. The elder Kean was indignant at this resolution, and angrily interdicted his son from appearing as an actor; but the latter was inflexible. The managers of Drury Lane thought that the *Magni nominis umbra* would produce a magical effect on the public, and they at once offered young Kean an engagement. He chose the character of 'Young Norval,' in Horne's tragedy of 'Douglas,' for his first appearance on October 1, 1827. The theatre was crowded to excess. Maclise having secured a seat in the pit, as near as possible to the footlights, determined to make a sketch of the *débutant*.

Young Norval does not appear until the first scene of the second act opens, when he is brought before Lord Randolph, whose life he had saved.

Lord Randolph says:—

> Next to myself, and equal to Glenalvon,
> In honour and command, shall Norval be.
> *Young Norval.* I know not how to thank you. Rude I am
> In speech and manners. Never 'till this hour
> Stood I in such a presence—yet, my Lord,
> There's something in my breast which makes me bold
> To say, that Norval ne'er will shame thy favour.

The appropriateness of the lines to the circumstances of the young actor produced an electrical effect on the audience. Peals of applause greeted him from all parts of the house, and whilst he stood for a few moments, as it were, transfixed with feelings of pride and graceful embarrassment, Maclise made the sketch: he executed a finished drawing from it that night. Mr. Croker had it lithographed and published next day, and the sale of the copies at ten shillings each was very large, and realised for Maclise a large sum *ultra* the expenses and the profits of the publisher.[1] It was an interesting episode in the lives of these distinguished men; each struggling forward at the same moment, but by different paths, to the goal of fame. Commissions for portraits in pencil and in water-colours now flowed in upon him, and he began to be known as a rising young artist. His first lodgings were at the house of a carver and gilder, in Newman Street (Oxford Street): he had merely a small drawing-room, where he received his sitters, and a sleeping-room;[2] he remained there

[1] This sketch is in the possession of his niece (Miss Banks).

[2] The owner of the house, with a taste peculiar to his trade, had inserted plates of looking-glass in the back of the drawing-room door, and all the panels of the window shutters. However, as the glare and glitter disturbed Maclise, and distracted the attention of those who sat for their portraits, he devoted some of his leisure hours to adorning all the panels with beautiful drawings in burnt Sienna, which had a charming effect. When he was leaving his lodgings this Vandal (the landlord) claimed compensation in damages for the desecration of his door and windows, not calculating that the period might arrive when these panels, like the doors, which inclose the altar-pieces in the Belgian

until the end of the year 1828. He still worked diligently at the Academy schools, making drawings for the competitive Exhibitions of the students; his progress was rapid and successful beyond all precedent. Every honour which the Academy could confer was gained by Maclise; *inter alia*, its highest prize. He was awarded the medal for the best drawing from the antique, then followed the medal for the best copy of a picture by Guido; and his culminating triumph, the highest prize that an art-student could win, was the gold medal he was presented with in the year 1829, for the best historical composition, the subject selected by the Academy being, 'The Choice of Hercules.' His ecstasy at thus reaching the object in which all his hopes and fears were centered, and for which he had so incessantly toiled and studied, may be imagined. He manifested his joy in the following characteristic letter to a young friend, then a medical student, Dr. MacEvers, whose acquaintance he had made in London:—

'14, Middlesex Hospital.

'My dear MacEvers,—I wrote to you on Sunday last. I found I had completely forgot the address

Crypts (and which the artists, as a part of their contract, painted gratuitously) would become of great value, he would have tried to enforce his claim, if a friend of Maclise had not expressed a determination to take the offending panels bodily out and insert new looking-glass instead. Many years after this, and when the artist had reached the zenith of his fame, Newman Street was searched for the dwelling of the carver and gilder, but he had long 'shuffled off his mortal coil,' and the painted panels had disappeared.

you gave me when we parted. I thought, from the name being a simple one, I could have recollected it, without reflecting that the same reason would also answer for its not impressing my memory. To-day (Wednesday) I left the book at Great Coram Street, and asked for your address, and obtained it from Powell himself: "You're Mr. Maclise, I presume; I beg to congratulate you sincerely; I was much interested in Mr. MacEvers' friend," &c. He seems a shrewd chap, but has a very rough countenance, you must allow. The nose is a rollicking good-natured feature, the mouth fastidious, but the eyes clever. Well, Sir! on Saturday night, Sir Martin Archer Shee took his chair, and there were present an overwhelming number, more than on any other previous occasion, for Sir Thomas Lawrence made it a private concern; the Duke of Sussex, Lord Brougham, the Bishops of London and Llandaff, and all the noble and distinguished patrons and lovers of art, artists, members, associates, and students. Well, as I was saying, he took his chair, and began to address the successful candidate, but who *that* was, or for whom the eulogy he poured forth was intended, was a matter of the most anxious doubt to the *trembling seven* that sat on the seat before him. Never was a full quarter of an hour's praise felt to be more momentous; for my part, I don't recollect one word *but my own name, which completed it.* Heretofore they have been more mer-

ciful, and have immediately made the announcement, and taken time for the display of their eloquence in commendation afterwards. I, however, do not affect to forget certain piquant words he used, e.g. "fancy, taste, originality, industry, having taken the highest honour in the University of Art," &c.

'When the decision was known, the clapping of hands from the roomful was not unpleasant to my ear, as it displayed a general feeling in my favour. I have since heard, from good authority, that all the members voted for me. Sir Martin made a most eloquent discourse. After my hand had been very well wrung with congratulations, I found Donovan, Roche, and other friends in the hall. They had already heard of my success, so went and had some champagne, &c. Then—it was raining as I came home; I unlatched the door, tumbled up stairs, broke my lamp, and was obliged to go to bed in the dark. On Sunday when I awoke, I felt ill, dined out, and drank too much wine. On Monday I got very wet, and on Tuesday had a severe cold and sore chest; Wednesday an increase of ditto—pitch plaster to my breast, mutton broth and gruel. I took last night two of your pills with good effect. I have written home. I have decided on not going over until September, to their great disappointment, but it would be miserable this time of the year. The "Times," "Morning Herald," "Post," and all the evening papers noticed me, and I shall be puffed

outright, I think, in the literary papers. I have notes from all quarters; this moment, one from L. E. L.: "Your well-merited success gave me every pleasure but surprise." I was wretchedly dull on Sunday, although not alone for a moment, yawning all day most fearfully; I suppose, from satiety and relaxation of anxiety. The fact is, I do not feel the triumph half as much as I should have felt the failure, for I have been most indiscreet in my communications; so I gave God thanks, not so much that I had succeeded, as that I had not failed. Write and tell me how you get on. I hear a distant tinkle of the bell, so good-bye.

'Yours truly,

'D. MACLISE.'

The distinction of having won the gold medal placed at his command the Travelling Studentship of the Academy, an advantage of which his friends thought he should avail himself—the pension attached to it would have afforded him ample means for a three years' residence in Italy—but his native pride of disposition induced him to decline it: he now saw before him a wide field for the display of his genius, altogether different from the arena within which his early efforts had been circumscribed. Conscious of his powers and full of ambition, he was resolved to tread the new path of action and fame which was thus opened to him. In this year (1829)

he appeared for the first time as an exhibitor; he measured himself with one of the most interesting and humorous scenes in Shakespeare's play of 'Twelfth Night.' It is taken from the third act. The scene is Olivia's garden, where she and her attendant (Maria) are awaiting an interview with the steward (Malvolio). Maria had mischievously dropped a letter addressed to Malvolio (as if from Olivia) on the walk where Malvolio passed whilst

I' the Sun practising behaviour to his own shadow.

Malvolio picks up the letter, and Maria comes into the garden with her mistress (the latter quite unconscious of the trick played by her maid), to witness the effect of the letter on the amorous steward—

Olivia. Where is Malvolio?

Maria. He is coming, madam,
But in strange manner—he is sure possessed.

Olivia. Why! what's the matter? does he rave?

Maria. No, madam, he does nothing but smile—your ladyship were best have guard about you if he comes, for sure the man is tainted in his wits.

Olivia. Go, call him hither—I'm as mad as he.

Enter MALVOLIO.

How now, Malvolio?

Malvolio. Sweet lady! ho, ho! (*he smiles fantastically.*)

Olivia. God comfort thee, why dost thou smile so?—and kiss thy hand so oft?

Malvolio here presents himself before his mistress in yellow stockings and cross gartered, 'a colour she abhors and a fashion she detests.' His ineffable vanity and coxcombry, in affecting the airs and

manner of the gentleman, are exquisitely expressed. The maid (Maria), who has wrought all the mischief, stands behind her mistress to watch the *dénouement*. Olivia's face exhibits a mingled expression of anger and astonishment. This picture proved that the young artist had deeply studied the springs of human action and passion so indispensable in rendering the characters of Shakespeare intelligible on canvas, and it gave prophetic indications of the genius which he afterwards manifested in illustrating other works of the great dramatist. It would be difficult to discover in his later efforts anything more graceful and pleasing, or more beautiful in point of colouring than this picture.[1] Patrons now began to crowd commissions upon him; the spell of a new enchanter in the art appeared to attract men of genius and influence to his studio and his society. In a letter to Crofton Croker, then in Cork, he thus describes a party to which he had been invited by Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, and also one at Jerdan's (the editor of the 'Literary Gazette'):—

'14, Charles Street.

'The Halls gave a party, and I met a great many lions there. I was at another party at Jerdan's, which, for length of duration, fairly rivalled the pre-

[1] This picture is in the Vernon Gallery collection—it appeared in the Dublin Exhibition in the year 1861. The Copyright was purchased by the proprietors of the 'Art Journal;' a very fine engraving was produced from it, which was presented to the subscribers of that paper in 1854.

ceding one; dancing until the cool blue gleam of morning intruded through the crevices of the shutters into the hot yellow room. I had the felicity of meeting Theodore Hook, who punned and speechified and improvised all during supper. The subject for his song he chose to be Yates's nose, who sat opposite to him, and truly surprisingly he introduced it, at the end of every verse, to the tune of "Derry Down." Yates sang some capital songs, and gave most admirable imitations of Matthews. By the bye, some one at supper said that you had been ill, and were now, he believed, in Ireland. "Ay," said Hook, "I am sorry to hear poor Croker has had a flying attack of the gout." There is something so racy in the way he says things, so unstudied and carelessly, that makes them very charming, and causes them to suffer materially when related afterwards. I saw "Thiernan Oge,"[1] and was exceedingly pleased; it has been highly successful, the scenery and dresses are splendid to a great degree; of the former, Ross Castle is a delightful picture. Bedford makes a glorious O'Donoghoo, and Weeks an excellent Dan O'Reilly. Harley plays in it (Samson Sinister); he goes about, looking for Paddy Blake's Echo, arrives at a certain spot, and calls out, "Where are you, Master Echo?" to which Weeks (who has placed himself on the top of a precipice to watch

[1] A Melo-dramatic Fairy Tale, by Planche, first performed at Drury Lane Theatre, April 20, 1829.

his movements) roars out, "What's that to you, you blackguard!" to the perfect horror of Samson. This and many other points the audience roar at. Weeks sings, "'Twas at the sign of the Fork," and gives the "whoo whoo" in inimitable style, with certain expressions and energetic flourishes of the shillelah. There are some delightful little groups made by fairies, and flowers with the moon shining above, and some very elegant dancing. I think it beats the pantomime in every way hollow.

'Your affectionate

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

Some idea may be formed of his wonderful skill of hand and rapidity of execution from the fact that, between the winter of 1829 and the summer of 1830, he produced seven pictures, all of which were exhibited in the latter year at the Royal Academy; viz.:—

'The Trysting Place.'
'A First Sitting.'
'Isabella's Favourite.'
'Portrait of Mrs. S. C. Hall.'
'Portrait of H. R. H. The Princess Sophia.'
'Portrait of Miss Landon (L. E. L.).'[1]
'Portrait of Thomas Campbell the Poet.'

He left London in the latter part of the month of

[1] In the 'Prout Papers,' Illustrated by Maclise, there is a very clever Engraving of Miss Landon, from this Portrait.

June 1830, accompanied by a friend, and arrived in Paris directly after the disastrous 'three days' of July that placed Louis Philippe on the throne. The city bore all the traces of the sanguinary conflict that had just concluded, and he was deeply impressed with the horrors of the scene. After some days passed in the Galleries of the 'Louvre,' the 'Luxembourg' and 'Versailles,' he resolved to visit the land of Velasquez and Murillo, and the Galleries of Madrid: he left Paris with his friend, and they journeyed on foot toward the south-western provinces of France. Unhappily when they arrived near the Pyrenees, he was attacked with illness, and they were compelled to retrace their steps and return to England.

It was in this year Maclise became acquainted with Mr. John Forster, the friend of Dickens: a warm and enthusiastic friendship ensued between them, which only terminated with the death of the artist.[1] In 1831 he exhibited six pictures:—

'The Sleeping Page.'

'Portrait of Lord Castlereagh.'

[1] Mr. Forster is well known as an accomplished writer: he is the author of—'The Arrest of the Five Members by Charles I.,' Murray, 8vo.; 'General Remonstrance, 1641, (with an Essay on English Freedom under the Plantagenet and Tudor Sovereigns,)' Murray, 8vo.; 'Sir John Eliott, a Biography, 1590-1632,' 2 vols., Murray, 8vo.; 'Biographies of Cromwell and De Foe,' &c. &c., and 'The Life of Oliver Goldsmith' (incomparably the best Memoir of the Poet that has ever been written).

Portrait of Miss Hardwicke and two other portraits.

In 1832 there appeared from his pencil, in the Exhibition, a beautiful picture—

'Puck disenchanting Bottom, Oberon and Titania reconciled' (from Shakespeare's 'Midsummer's Night Dream').

He made a visit to Cork in the summer of this year. It is not difficult to conjecture what his feelings were on returning to his native city. Five years had scarcely elapsed since he left it, an almost unknown and friendless boy, to enter on a new and problematical career; he had passed the period of probation; no longer the mere student, he was now to be confronted with the rising talent which the metropolis of the world attracts to itself; for him there was no alternative save to elevate himself to the foremost rank of art, or be driven to pursue the downward, cheerless track that so many gifted, but neglected artists had trodden before him.

CHAPTER V.

Maclise revisits Cork—'All-hallow Eve'—'Scene at Blarney'—His Picture, 'Mokanna Unveiling his Features to Zelica'—'Installation of Captain Rock'—Description of the Picture—'The Chivalrous Vow of the Ladies and the Peacock'—Maclise elected an Associate of the Royal Academy—'Macbeth and the Weird Sisters,' Macready as Macbeth—'Interview of Charles I. with Cromwell'—Portrait of Sir John Soane, presented to the Literary Fund—Jerdan and Dr. Cooke Taylor—Destruction of the Picture—Correspondence on the subject—Fraser's Magazine—Portrait of Lady Sykes—'Bohemian Gypsies,' &c.—Seven Pictures exhibited by Maclise: 'A Lady at her Embroidery,' 'Conversazione,' 'Salvator Rosa Painting Masaniello,' 'Olivia and Sophia fitting out Moses for the Fair,' 'Page, with a Brace of Pheasants,' 'The Woodranger,' 'Merry Christmas in the Baron's Hall'—Description of this Picture—Maclise's Poem in Fraser on the Subject—Letter to John Forster—The latter introduces the Artist to Dickens—Their Friendship—Amusing Letter, the joint-production of Forster and Dickens.

He was delighted to find himself amongst his old friends again, and they welcomed him with pleasure and pride. He remained a short time in Cork, and then made an excursion to Killarney, bending his course through the supremely wild and picturesque district of 'Glengariffe,' and the lakes: he returned to Cork in the latter part of October, his portfolio filled with sketches of the exquisite scenery of that romantic region. At this period there lived in the village of 'Blarney' (a very few miles from Cork) the Rev. Matthew Horgan; he was the parish priest, a genial old gentleman, famous for his antiquarian

research, and his profound acquaintance with the literature of Ireland.

A man he was to all the country dear,'—

the arbiter to whom all disputes and differences that sprang up in the parish were invariably referred; in fact, he claimed to possess a kind of feudal jurisdiction over his tractable parishioners, and he 'had his claim allowed.' It was the invariable custom of the good old priest to invite a large party on 'All-hallow eve:' it was a social gathering, where persons of superior position in society were to be found unaffectedly mingling with the poorest peasantry of the parish. Crofton Croker and Maclise were invited to this entertainment, and whilst the young artist, charmed with the novelty of the scene, surrendered himself, heart and soul, to the enjoyments of the night, and joined in the harmless hilarity that prevailed, he contrived to sketch every group in the 'Barn.' On his return to London in the beginning of November 1832, he commenced his wonderful picture of 'All-hallow Eve,' and he wrought with such unceasing diligence and rapidity, that it was ready for, and appeared in, the Exhibition of 1833. As the earliest specimen in oil, of his powers on a large scale, its appearance produced an almost electrical effect on the public.

Then Peggy was dancing with Dan,
While Maureen the lead was melting,
To prove how her fortunes ran,
With cards that old Nancy dealt in;

There was Kate and her sweetheart Will
In nuts their true love burning;
And poor Norah, though smiling still,
She'd missed the snap-apple turning.

In the fore-ground of the picture several groups appear; the most prominent are a stalwart and open-mouthed country boy and a buxom girl, trying to catch the apples which are affixed to the points of the cross-sticks, or 'snap-apple,' suspended from the ceiling: near this group a couple are dancing, and on the right are the fiddler and piper: the former has the expression on his face of exquisite torture caused by a young urchin who is slyly tickling his ear with a straw; and as the unhappy musician dare not stop the music, the contortions of his face are most ludicrous. This picture is so well and so widely known by the engraving from it, that a more detailed description will be unnecessary here. It is characterised by great boldness of touch with simplicity of composition. The grouping and attitudes are most artless and unrestrained, and the entire *coup d'œil* fraught with beauty and effect.[1]

In this year (1833) he also exhibited at the British Institution 'A Love Adventure of Francis I. with Diana of Poictiers,' and a picture, the subject taken from

[1] The principal characters are portraits of Sir W. Scott, Crofton Croker, the Sisters of the Artist, Perceval Banks (who was married to Anne, the younger sister), and the Old Clergyman, who appears in the back-ground, compelling two of his 'Boys,' who had been trying their shillelahs on each other's heads, to shake hands and be friends.

Moore's 'Lalla Rookh,'—'Mokanna Unveiling his Features to Zelica': it was a signal success, and amply vindicated the prestige which 'All-hallow Eve' had attached to his name. It was a work of no ordinary difficulty to produce an original treatment of this subject. Several artists of admitted reputation and ability had previously made attempts to embody the 'Veiled Prophet,' but in each of them the form and face of 'Mokanna' were as fully enveloped and concealed by the silver veil as when Zelica first yielded to its infernal spell. Maclise was resolved to portray the Prophet in all the terrible and thrilling hideousness of the moment when he lifts the Veil and exclaims to Zelica—

> 'Here! see if hell, with all its powers to damn,
> Can add one curse to the foul thing I am.'

This picture at once raised the artist into prominence; it fully realised the foreshadowings of his great ability, and his success could not any longer be doubted or impeded.[1]

He was very much employed in portraiture during the years 1833 and 1834, and he only exhibited one picture in the latter year, 'The Installation of Cap-

[1] Lord Lytton says of this Picture, in his work 'England and the English,' after referring to the high-wrought elegance and chaste humour of Leslie (that Washington Irving of the easel), 'the pleasant wit of Webster,' and the elaborate yet easy charm of Newton: 'The most rising painter of this class is Mr. Maclise, whose reputation has greatly and deservedly increased since this work first appeared. His picture of "Mokanna raising the Veil" is full of talent.'

tain Rock:' the subject is taken from 'Tipperary Tales.'

'Amid tears and lamentations of women Delaney advanced to the tomb on which the murdered man was laid, and placing his right hand upon the body swore to revenge his death. Ere his solemn vow was thrice repeated, a hunchback mendicant had elevated himself on the shoulders of one of the heterogeneous assemblage, and with the old military cap worn by the former leader of the faction, crowned Delaney as "Captain Rock," muttering, "upon this rock I will build my church," while the "Buccaugh," unbuckling his wooden leg, flourished it with a deep shout that for a moment stilled the groups which had collected within the ruins of the abbey, and, to use the words of Cowper, were agitated like—

> The working of a sea before a calm
> That rocks itself to rest.'

This is a noble picture: the scene is a country churchyard by moonlight; in the foreground is the corpse of the dead man lying on a tomb; the body is bared from the waist upwards, and the blood which has oozed from the bullet wound is seen congealed round it. Standing beside the tomb, with his right hand placed on the body of the slain captain, is the newly elected chief; opposite to him is the Nestor of the brotherhood, administering to the new chief the oath of fidelity to the band, and vengeance for the murder of the captain. The 'Buc-

caugh' (or cripple), mounted on the shoulders of a stalwart countryman, is flourishing the wooden leg of which he has divested himself for the moment. It is impossible to describe all the elements of this extraordinary picture, and its wonderful details, so happily rendered. The felicitous arrangement of the several groups—the drinking party—the village orator—the excited crowd round the tomb—the stately ruins of the old abbey—the exquisite disposition of light and shade—the moonbeams struggling through the groined arches and carved mullions, and falling on the pallid features of the dead man—form a combination of extraordinary power and expression. This picture is in the possession of Mr. Hawker, of New Street, Birmingham.

In 1835 his gorgeous work, 'The Chivalrous Vow of the Ladies, and the Peacock,' was the only one exhibited by him.

On November 2, 1836, he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy. His friend, Mr. S. A. Hart, R.A., was elected an Associate on the same evening. Maclise was then but twenty-four years old, and his attaining that honour was a circumstance perhaps unprecedented at such an age. In this year he exhibited two pictures.

'Macbeth and the Weird Sisters.' The design is selected from the first scene in the fourth act. It represents a dark cave, in the centre of which is seen a huge cauldron, boiling. The three witches,

Hecate and the others, are seen grouped round the cauldron.

> *Macbeth.* How now, you secret black and midnight hags,
> What is't you do?
> I conjure you by that which you profess
> (Howe'er you came to know it) answer me.

The picture is a very clever one. It gave the artist an opportunity of painting his friend Mr. Macready as Macbeth. There is an unearthly expression in the hideous faces of the witches, which strikingly delineates the idea of Shakespeare, and the entire *coup d'œil* is grand and impressive.

The second picture was a representation of 'The Interview of Charles I. with Cromwell.'

The Literary Fund Society, which reckoned amongst its members some of the most eminent men in England, was this year presented by Maclise with a portrait of Sir John Soane, the well-known architect, and author of 'Designs for Buildings.' It appeared that for some reason which was not distinctly communicated to the Society, Sir John Soane desired to have possession of this portrait. It became obvious, in the course of a discussion as to the propriety of this demand, and the rather arrogant tone in which it was made, that the picture was considered by the subject of it as rather *too* literal, the artist not having ministered to the vanity of Sir John by 'smoothing away the wrinkles.' Jerdan, his ardent friend, strenuously advocated the sur-

render of the portrait; but the great majority of the members resented the attempt to compromise their independence, and passed a series of resolutions condemnatory of the conduct of Sir John Soane, and they refused to part with the portrait. Thereupon Jerdan entered the room where the picture was hung, and cut it to pieces with a penknife. The following correspondence will very fully disclose all the circumstances, and afford a clue to the controversy which ensued, and its results.

To Daniel Maclise, Esq.

'131 Grove Street, Camden Town,
April 20, 1836.

'Sir,—I am probably unknown to you, even by name, but what I deem my duty to a countryman whose rapidly extending fame affords me equal pleasure and pride, induces me to lay before you certain circumstances connected with the portrait of Sir John Soane, generously presented by you to the "Literary Fund." It may be necessary to premise, that I have been from the first one of the minority opposed to making any concession. . . . I would, however, scarcely regret being in a minority when application on the subject was made to you, after I had heard your admirable reply, which so strongly bears the impress of the man of genius and the gentleman. A copy of your letter was sent to Sir John Soane

with a copy of the resolution. He sent no answer whatever. At the meeting of the Literary Fund Committee held last month, Mr. John Button, acting professedly for Sir John Soane, delivered a message to the effect, "that if the portrait painted and presented to this Society by Mr. Maclise was not unreservedly given up to Sir John Soane, his patronage should be withdrawn from the Society, an intended bequest withheld, and an appeal made to the public." It was resolved,

"1. That the message was a gross insult to the Society.

"2. That an enquiry be instituted how far Sir John Soane authorised the delivery of such a message.

"3. That if the message be proved to have been dictated by Sir John Soane, his name shall be forthwith erased from the list of Vice-Presidents."

'These resolutions stand for discussion on Wednesday next. *On Saturday night last Mr. Jerdan obtained admission into the Society's apartments under false pretences, during the Secretary's absence, and cut the portrait to pieces with a penknife.* He has said that you authorised him to do so. I cannot believe that you would have thus sacrificed your fame, and insulted a body to whom you so lately paid the highest compliment. The moment I heard such a base slander vented against a gentleman whose talents I admire, whose character I respect, and whose connection with me by the ties of a common

county and country have a claim on my attention, I resolved to make you acquainted with the circumstances.

'I have the honour to be,

'Your obedient servant,

'W. C. TAYLOR, LL.D.'

Maclise received at the same time a communication from the Secretary of the Literary Fund, very much of the same character as the foregoing letter, in reference to the destruction of the picture and manifestly intended rather to elicit his opinion on the propriety, or otherwise of the conduct of Jerdan, than with any other object. Maclise replied to the letter of the Secretary, by referring to an antecedent communication of his, where he expressed his regret that any difference of opinion should exist amongst the members in respect of the portrait; that when he presented it to the Literary Fund he was influenced by no motive save a desire to contribute to the interests of the Society, and that he cared not personally for the fate of the picture, if that object were in the slightest degree realised. Jerdan (who was one of the first and firmest friends of the artist) thus wrote to him:—

'16 Motcombe Street, Belgrave Square,
May 14, 1836.

'Dear Maclise,—I endeavoured, when we accidentally met on Wednesday, *vivâ voce* to express to you

how highly I estimated your conduct in a recent affair; but that it did not go beyond what I anticipated from you may be judged from the following opinion of your character contained in a letter of explanation to the Literary Fund Committee, previously written and sent to that body. In it I thus spoke of you: "He, with all the liberality which belongs to true genius, declared that he cared not how his work was disposed of or annihilated, so that it contributed to the interests of the fund. I assure you that my admiration of the noble spirit he displayed on this occasion rendered my task the more difficult to perform, for the repugnance I experienced to destroy any production of a man at once so gifted and so self-sacrificing for our sake, is not to be expressed. If aught could exalt my esteem for him more highly than before, it would be his conduct in this affair, for which, whatever may be the issue to me, he is entitled to the everlasting thanks of the Literary Fund Society." How congenially you responded to those sentiments, though they could not be known to you, I deeply feel, and I hope you will allow the accompanying trifle to remain with you as a memorial, not only of the grateful sense I entertain of your manly and honourable proceeding in this matter, but of older regard and friendship. It is advisedly a thing of no intrinsic value, in order that it may be accepted in its pure light as a token of my long-cherished and unalterable esteem, and I cannot

refer to this without adding a word on that point. Babbling, if not malicious, persons have, I understand, been talking of a coolness lately existing between you and me. For myself, I can truly aver that nothing of the kind ever entered into my breast, nor, can I believe, into yours. I had the pleasure of being the first public writer to welcome your appearance in this great mart of genius, and from that moment to the present I have hailed with rejoicing every step you have taken in your rapidly ascending career—proud that my early prognostications were more than realised by your deserved and splendid advance to reputation and fame. Believe me, that my *warmth* has never changed, and that, remembering with delight the many happy hours we have spent together,

'I am, dear Maclise, with the utmost sincerity,

'Your faithful and admiring friend,

'W. JERDAN.

'D. Maclise, Esq.'

In 'Fraser's Magazine' (August 1836), a sketch of Sir John Soane by 'Alfred Croquis' appeared in Regina's 'Gallery of Literary Characters,' accompanied by an article from the trenchant pen of Oliver Yorke (Maginn), of which the following is an extract:—

'Veluti votivâ picta tabellâ forma senis.

'Everyone has heard of the *fracas* at the "Lite-

rary Fund,"—of Maclise the painter, and Jerdan the Iconoclast.

. . . . . .

'We know Jerdan to have been actuated by praiseworthy motives in putting out of the way the picture, which he facetiously called "a bone of contention." The grave objection taken to its excessive likeness must apply, we fear, equally to our sketch, and it will be seen that the *features* of the case have not been improved by the penknife of the Gazetteer. You can demolish a monument, but you cannot grapple with ubiquity—a MS. may be destroyed, but editions defy torch and Turk—a picture is cut in shreds, but "Regina's Gallery" is flung open to the eye of ages yet unborn.'[1]

[It may be here mentioned that the artist, who had heretofore spelt his name McClise, appears to have altered it to Maclise.]

In 1837 he produced seven pictures, which were exhibited at the Royal Academy, viz.:—

1. 'Portrait of Lady Sykes.'

2. 'Bohemian Gypsies.' (A wonderfully fine picture.)

[1] Jerdan was the editor of the 'Literary Gazette' when Maclise commenced his career in London—he enjoyed a high reputation as a writer; he became an enthusiastic friend of the young artist. It is said that it was Jerdan first discovered the germ of Literary Excellence in Miss Landon (L. E. L.), and in his paper appeared her first Poems. Through Jerdan Maclise became acquainted with Miss Landon, and a cordial friendship existed between the distinguished Authoress and the Artist, up to the period of her departure from England.

3. 'Sketch of the favourite Valet of Lord Byron.'
4. 'A Lady at a Casement.'
5. 'Sir Francis and Lady Sykes and Children.'
6. 'A Lady at her Embroidery.'
7. 'The Conversazione.'

In 1838 five pictures from his pencil appeared in the Exhibition:—

1. 'Salvator Rosa painting his friend Masaniello.'
2. 'Olivia and Sophia fitting out Moses for the Fair.'

'The next morning I found his sisters mighty busy in fitting out Moses for the fair; trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the colt, with a deal box before him, to bring home groceries in. He had on a coat made of that cloth they call "thunder and lightning," which, though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away; his waistcoat was of gosling green, and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black ribband.'—*Vide* 'Vicar of Wakefield.'

In colour, composition and expression, this work may be classed amongst the happiest efforts of the artist.[1]

[1] Mr. Clow, of Liverpool, purchased this picture. When Maclise revisited Cork in the year 1832, he made a slight water-colour drawing in the album of Miss Corbett of the same subject. In the larger picture the design of the album drawing is preserved, with a few alterations; thus proving that the conceptions of the artist, in maturer years, very

3. 'The Wood Ranger.'
4. 'The Page with a Brace of Pheasants.'
5. 'The Merry Christmas in the Baron's Hall.'

(*Vide* Rhymes in 'Fraser's Magazine,' 1838.)[1]

This is a large and remarkably clever performance. The scene is laid in the hall of a good old English gentleman; his guests and family are seen assembled round a table, whilst a line of jolly serving-men are bearing the boar's head down the hall, in a procession, towards a table on the *daïs*. Crowded round another table is a group of mummers and vassals, enjoying themselves: the versatility exhibited by the artist in arranging the various groups is quite wonderful. In one part of the hall a bevy of beautiful girls and young men are playing at 'Hunt the Slipper;' in another part the light is skilfully managed to fall on the faces of a group who are kissing under the mistletoe bough. This picture, although vastly superior to 'All-hallow Eve,' reminds one of that work in the disposition of the several groups, and the

rarely transcend in fervour and freshness the imaginings of earlier inspirations. When a mere boy, he made a number of sketches from scenes in the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' a work, he has been heard to say, that afforded great scope for the imagination of an artist. The water-colour drawing is in the possession of Dr. D. Corbett, of Dublin.

[1] Maclise, who affixed the signature of 'Alfred Croquis' to his sketches in 'Fraser's Magazine,' used the same '*nom de plume*' in occasional literary contributions. In the 'Fraser' of May 1838, contemporaneously with the exhibition of this Picture, a clever Poem from his pen appeared, a poetical description of the work; it is entitled, 'Christmas Revels, an epic rhapsody, in twelve duans, by Alfred Croquis, Esq.' It occupies nine pages of the Magazine, and is cleverly written.

consummate cleverness with which the painter has contrived to impart to one hundred different faces as many various lineaments of expression, each in harmony with the character the figure represents. In accuracy of drawing it is perfectly faultless: it is altogether a grand picture, and contains upwards of one hundred figures.

During the progress of one of his works for the Exhibition, Mr. Forster suggested to him a slight alteration in the design; he thus refers to it:—

'My dear Forster,—It is not for me to vindicate myself, even if I felt that I could do so; and to make the alteration you propose, at this late hour would be impossible. I had tried this figure in various ways: in mute wonderment, hands clasped in adoration, on knee, his head close to hers, his hand to his heart. I recollected all bed-side figures. I thought of dozens of Joachims looking on Imogenes, Tarquins and Lucretii, Don Raphaels and Othellos, and I assure you it was not easy to make a new figure of this sort. The entire should be changed if I attempted to alter a part; for the expression, such as it is, is the same throughout, and the arm is in unison with the rest. I think, if you look into the face, you will find something near the expression. I am always afraid of overdoing; the touch of a pin's point would make his eye glare again, if I liked, and a line would open his mouth into paralysis. I have always hated that sort of *digittated*

wonderment that West, and Westall, and others have painted, and that still pervades the scene, although I mean I never saw it yet exhibited in life. If, instead of a lout of the King's Theatre you had compared him to a lout of the Queen's Own, 'twould be some consolation. Mon cher, I am sick to death of it. I

hate it more than I can tell you: it has faded away from me as I advanced, and when I look at the result I am inclined to kick a hole in it: after all, 'tis but a piece of nonsense, not worth criticism, breaking a fly upon the rack. I must go with you to-morrow.

'Ever yours, mon cher, with my thanks,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

He again writes on the next day: —

'My dear Forster,—I shall be at Verrey's at 5.30 o'clock, and we'll do as we please afterwards.

'I cannot fancy Wright as "Paul," after Liston.

'Yours, ever,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

It was in this year that Mr. Forster introduced Maclise to Dickens. The tastes and pursuits of the three friends were so congenial that from thenceforth they were almost inseparable; and this affectionate intercourse was maintained without interruption for nearly thirty years, interchanging nearly every day 'billets' of the most friendly and frequently humorous character. This is a specimen: although in the handwriting of Dickens, it is the joint production of Mr. Forster and the great author:—

'Mr. John Forster (of Lincoln's Inn Fields) and Mr. Charles Dickens (of universal popularity) request the favour of Mr. Maclise's company at supper at the Parthenon Club to-night, at half-past ten o'clock exactly.

'Thinking it possible that Mr. Maclise may have gone to court at an early hour this morning, they address this letter both to his private house and the Athenæum; and but for the veneration due to their youthful sovereign, they would have forwarded a duplicate to the Palace at Pimlico.

'Twenty-fourth February, Saturday Morning.'

CHAPTER VI.

In 1839, Maclise exhibits four pictures: 'Sileno introducing Apollo disguised as a Shepherd;' 'The Adventures of Gil Blas;' 'Robin Hood'—'Portrait of a Lady'—In 1840, Maclise elected a Royal Academician with his friend Mr. Hart—'The Banquet Scene in "Macbeth"'—'Scene from "Twelfth Night"'—'Portrait of Charles Dickens'—Letter of Maclise to Dickens—In 1841, he exhibits 'The Sleeping Beauty;' 'An Irish Girl;' 'Hunt the Slipper at Flamborough's'—In 1842, 'The Return of the Knight;' 'Play Scene in "Hamlet"'—Description of the Pictures—He visits Paris with his Sisters—Letters to Forster, with a Sketch—'The Origin of the Harp'—'Scene from "Gil Blas"'—'Portrait of W. Harrison Ainsworth'—'Scene from "Comus"'—'Scene from "Undine"'—Letters from Macready and D'Orsay.

In 1839, four pictures from his easel were exhibited at the Royal Academy—

1. Scene from the Burletta of 'Midas,' 'Sileno introducing Apollo (disguised as a shepherd) to his wife and daughter.'

2. 'The Adventures of Gil Blas with that knowing one who sups at his expense, and repays him with flattery.'

3. 'Robin Hood;' the subject taken from an illustrated ballad in 'Fraser's Magazine' 1839.

4. 'Portrait of a Lady.'

It will be remembered that on Nov. 2, 1836, Mr. S. A. Hart and Maclise were elected as Associates of the Royal Academy; and now, on Feb. 20, 1840, they both received the honour of being named

Academicians. On that occasion Maclise presented his diploma picture to the Academy—'The Wild Huntsman.' He exhibited this year four pictures—

1. 'The Banquet Scene in "Macbeth."'

Macbeth. Thou canst not say, I did it—never shake
Thy gory locks at me.
Rosse. Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.
Lady Macbeth. Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat.
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well. If much you note him,
You shall offend him, and extend his passion;
Feed, and regard him not.—(*To Macbeth*) Are you a man?

This is a very noble picture; it attracted much more attention than any other work in the Exhibition. The artist painted it expressly for the Earl of Chesterfield. The Commissioners of the Great International Exhibition of 1862 made an application to his lordship for permission to place it in the picture gallery, and it appeared there.[1]

2. 'Scene from "Gil Blas."'
3. 'Scene from "Twelfth Night."'
4. 'Portrait of his friend Charles Dickens.'

A circumstance connected with this portrait is so characteristic of the artist and the author that I cannot refrain from mentioning it here. When the portrait was finished Dickens enclosed a cheque of considerable amount to Maclise, who promptly returned it with the following note:

[1] It is now in the possession of Mr. Cozens, Clapham Park. A smaller picture—the same subject—was painted by the artist for Mr. Williams and is now in his possession.

'My dear Dickens,—How could *you* think of sending me a cheque for what was to me a matter of gratification? I am almost inclined to be offended with you. May I not be permitted to give some proof of the value I attach to your friendship? I return the cheque, and regret that you should have thought it necessary to send it to yours faithfully,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

Dickens made another effort to induce him to accept the cheque, saying: 'Do not be offended. I quite appreciate the feeling which induced you to return what I sent you; notwithstanding, I *must* ask you to take it back again. If I could have contemplated for an instant the selfish engrossment of so much of your time and extraordinary powers, I should have had no need (knowing you, I knew that well) to resort to the little device I played off. I will take anything else from you at any time that you will give me, any scrap from your hand; but I entreat you not to disturb this matter. I am willing to be your debtor for anything else in the whole wide range of your art, as you shall very readily find whenever you put me to the proof.'

It does not appear how this friendly controversy terminated.

He made another visit to Paris this year, accompanied by his sisters; and from thence Mr. Forster received the subjoined letter from him:—

'My dear Forster,—We started at 10.30 A.M., and arrived in Paris at 8. Everything right but the sea-sickness. Put up at Hôtel Montmorency, Boulevard des Italiens, in the merriest part, and had "petits appartements fraîchement décorés et bien meublés" of three rooms *en suite*, very much be-mirrored and crowded with sofas and slippery with waxed floors; balconies looking over the heads of thousands sipping their *café* and *petit verre*; this *au troisième*, and yet expensive to me, fifteen francs a day; however, we made the most of the situation, for we were, with our elbows squared, at our windows whenever at home, and always amused by the throng beneath and opposite. Two days I hired a carriage and showed them all distant places, such as Bois de Boulogne, Longchamps, Champ de Mars, Invalides, and some of the outer boulevards, Gobelins, Père La Chaise, Jardin de Plantes; but generally we omnibussed it, and for a few sous each you can get any distance along and athwart the city. You can go your particular length one way and then take another going at a right angle. This is an admirable system, and might be adopted in London with good effect; both vehicles are at your service for the one fare; that is, you can take, as it were, from "Elephant and Castle" to Charing Cross, and then another 'bus to the Bank. I saw not the monarch ——; he was at Saint Cloud, and it would require the wide-awake power of "our correspondent" to be

able to assert whether he is really in the hearts of the people or not. It constantly impressed itself upon me, in spite of a consciousness that it was but a loose way of thinking, What's the odds, as long as they're happy, *who* is over them? and, to look right or left for miles and miles, from the Arc de l'Étoile to the Column of July, happy they seem to be—perhaps to a superficial observer alone; I know not. Perhaps there is a volcano beneath; but it requires again the "own correspondent" to find it out by looking beneath the surface. It requires a strong imagination to conjure up in that gayest of scenes what one has read of the barricade and street fighting, and the dead cart, lighted by torch and surrounded by the corps of the Blouse, singing,

> Mourir pour la patrie,
> C'est le sort le plus beau, le plus digne d'envie.

'One day we found at the beautiful little chapel built on the site where the Duc d'Orléans was killed a number of people, I suppose from the country, gazing at the statue of the Duc with intense interest, and listening to the person in charge of the place, who saw him die, and was actually shedding tears as he narrated the circumstances. The figure, I suppose, you have seen; it is a beautiful and sensible piece of monumental marble, and the angel figure who supports the head is sculptured by the Princess Marie, the Duc's sister: although intended for another purpose, it has been appropriated to this.

Most certainly, I think the English are not popular now. I never felt this so much before, and I am sure it is not fancy. Les Anglais are *pour rire* everywhere. I heard two fellows holding comic dialogue beneath the Pillar of July to a delighted audience in a circle of hundreds, and every night there are going on in the open platforms, brilliantly lighted with footlights, in front of the restaurants in the Champs Élysées, and to thousands of spectators, caricatures of the English "The Lord," and his ways in Paris. The most popular is one right behind the garden-wall of our Embassy, and within earshot of the Élysée. Again we are *served out* in the Cirque Olympique and at the Hippodrome. Last Sunday we went to the latter, at three o'clock, to see a balloon with three men suspended by their heels, and there, figured to the life, was a comic group of English jockeys, subjected to all sorts of indignant and vulgar treatment; there was *Lord Chesterfield, his very self*, with enormous whiskers of red hair, standing out from his cheeks *à l'anglaise*, with white cords and tops. And oh! how they knocked him about. He was thrown, he was dragged along the

arena, through the mud, until he was covered with one mass of dirt, he was ignominiously beaten in the boxing match, and this was received by the laughing shrieks of thousands in these vast circles. I can assure you I was d——bly annoyed, and the more because my neighbours—right and left before, and behind—kept looking to see whether we liked it. Isabella seemed to excite great attention as we walked along, and we heard everywhere the word "Anglais" as we passed, and we said to ourselves, "How mistaken you are!" I knocked a French *ouvrier* over, one day—*fact!* He pushed me off with a "sacré" because I most inoffensively came near a scaffold for repairing a shop-front; for the life of me I could not help it. But I gave him back the shove with interest so large that it brought him down in a stagger, and then I thought I was in for some demonstration; but he contented himself only by some growling. How difficult it is to express your anger in French words; your passion evaporates in translation. I attempted it on an exorbitant waiter; only frightened my sisters and made myself, I fear, another exemplar of a comic Englishman. I saw "nobody, no, not I, nor nobody e'er saw me." That letter Millais gave me I dropped at Morton's door and ran for it, lest he should send after me. The letter Graves *would* give me I placed on the printseller's counter (Goupil & Co.). I did not call on Oliffe;[1] we were for ever

[1] Sir Joseph Oliffe, then Physician to the Embassy.

passing his door, and amused ourselves by threatening him at every corner. I saw Régnier once in "L'Avare," but was dying to get out more than I—or you especially—ever were at that Haymarket, to which you *will* go. No Miss Power saw I, and, alas! that I should say it, no tomb of the Abélard and Héloïse of Gore House. I asked of the printseller; he did not know where he was buried. I had not the address. I went to Galignani, and they said it was at St. Germains, but could not be certain. The hotel-keeper did not know, and so I gave it up. We went, I do believe, everywhere; ascended the pillars in the Pantheon and the Arc, leaving Isabella below to look at a *café* in the Shade *Limonade gaseuse* to compensate for the chair she occupied. I sketched at the Louvre—*not* the pictures, but some of the *artistes* at work; but one day an attendant, who had stood rather smiling at my performance, at length, but with great courtesy, told me it was "défendu d'étudier d'après nature," which fully accounts (thought I deeply and sarcastically) for the state of art study here. There is a considerable forest of easels around the "Murillo," exaggerating its merits, which, to me, are of the insipid sort. I felt as if I had seen it from my cradle; with her little Spanish face and upturned eyes, and robe of pink and blue, and a garland of Cupids on clouds below. These are freshly painted, as if fed on roses. The classification now in the Long Gallery is admirable. You can limit yourself

and walk straight to the department you want; from early Italian to the French time of Jouvenet; you have all the schools. With what real mortification one thinks of the dome of Trafalgar Square and its petty possessions! There is a soul and a spirit ever evidenced by the numberless students and copyists that conveys the idea that art is alive and stirring, and really liked by the people. It is the same at the Luxembourg — a most admirable *paysage* by Rosa Bonheur, a beautiful girl, that is the finest thing I ever saw—oxen ploughing in the sunlight, over a great cloddy tract; it is purchased for the collection. In the gardens of the Luxembourg there now stands a circle of goddess statues, in white marble, of all the Queens of France from Clotilde to Marie-Antoinette. Everywhere there are improvements in the gardens (Tuilleries), and elsewhere, in the arid and hot courts of the Louvre and Carrousel, of most grateful spots of *gazon*, so precious and so rare in France. The gardeners are now putting down the turf, and I see many a new statue with the last glisten upon it telling judiciously against the dark foliage. The fountains play always from twelve till sunset in the Place Royale; this used not to be the case. There were six bodies in the Morgue one day that I passed, one was a black, there were two women, and all in such a state that I had to sit down on a doorstep to recover myself, as I had once done with Dickens. I saw some fishermen in a boat, with a miraculous

draught of some sort of gleaming small fish, caught in a net just beneath the walls of the wretched Morgue. Into Notre-Dame, where we were much edified (as Pepys would say) by a wedding; afterwards a swim down the Seine in L'École de Natation d'Henri IV.; beneath his statue, where a hundred were spending their days in nakedness, and women placidly a netting. I, with trunk-hose buttoned over pelvis, did marvels in the way of natation, "Savez-vous nager?" said the man to me. "Oui" said I. It is very difficult to swim the whole length of the bath against the current, and the intricate pilings and general substructure of the bath are horridly suggestive of every kind of putrescence that possibly might be lingering in the gloom. At Versailles is an admirable arrangement; you may wander where you will, only being directed by studiously courteous officials, and a magnificent band plays daily in the gardens near the great fountain. We went by the Rue Droite, and returned by the Rue Gauche, getting a very good view of Paris and its neighbourhood by both routes. The English are made to pay, as well as being laughed at. Shoes and gloves are much dearer, as my sisters found by purchase of a pair or two, than they are in Oxford Street, and the items in my hotel-bill were frightful every morning. I should think I have been in all the churches in Paris. What a hunt for Scripture painting is here—works presented to the churches by the Ville de

Paris—and what admirable style of decoration adopted recently by a few; St.-Germaine-des-Près and St.-Vincent-de-Paul, beautiful and stately works by Flandrin in both, with the figures relieved, and the sometime shady place compensated for by a gleaming gold ground. One day, as we went into the court of the École des Beaux Arts, we met a group of all the members who had been at a council to judge of the students' works for the "prix de Rome." The porter showed me the *back* of Paul de la Roche as he passed, a little behind the rest, so that I saw, as it were, all the artists without seeing one. Came to Boulogne in five hours, express, in Grégor's especial permit, causing me everywhere to be conjectured some very distinguished but incognate foreigner; walked on the heights next to the column; examined the fortifications imbedded in turf, with slumbering soldiers and yawning sentinels; next, over the town at night, and walked into the perfidious packet bound for Albion, and dead sick in a minute after leaving the pier; women down in cabin, I on deck, deluged with rain and spray. I was glad to see *French* evidence of human weakness, and to think that *gloire* was not everything to them. But to see them aboard with all the stiffness taken out of them, their very moustaches bedraggled. I thought that our best national defences would not be in militia or martello towers, but in the *mal de mer.* I think "Perfidious Albion" ought, however, to make

her own sons exempt. I always feel more disgraced by sea-sickness, as being an islander. I feel delighted that our Queen is suffered to rule the waves, and I think it fair enough that Albert should pay the penalty. As for the Frenchmen, in my mind, "Britannia needs no bulwarks," or towers whatever "along the steep," while Gaul's proud bile is all discharged ere half-way o'er the deep. I found my relations below exclaiming that "never again," &c., &c. So into train and away 'HOME.'

In 1841 four pictures were exhibited by him—

1. 'An Irish Girl.'
2. 'The Sleeping Beauty.'
3. 'A Lady in a Hindoo's dress.'

[The costume and jewellery adorning the figure were furnished by Captain Meadows Taylor, author of 'Confessions of a Thug.']

4. 'Hunt the Slipper at Flamborough's."

'Who should enter the room but our two great acquaintances from Town, Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Skeggs! Description would but beggar, therefore it is unnecessary to describe this new mortification. Death! to be seen by ladies of such high breeding in such vulgar attitudes . . . We seemed stuck to the ground for some time as if actually petrified with amazement.'[1]

[1] Vide *Vicar of Wakefield*, cap. xi.

In 1842 he exhibited three pictures:—

1. 'The Return of the Knight' (a most charming performance).

2. 'The Play Scene in "Hamlet."'

This, if not one of the greatest, is assuredly one of the most popular of his pictures. Before it was transmitted to the Academy, many persons called at his studio to see it and the 'The Origin of the Harp,' which also appeared in the Exhibition of this year. The following characteristic letter to his friend describes two of his visitors:—

'Monday night, 10 o'clock.

'My dear Forster,—Let me pour my woes into your friendly "buzzum." You saw two men come in here as you went out; one of them was a Mr. K——, a *nouveau riche*, who has lately begun to buzz about artists. He bought that large picture of ——. Well, sir, can you believe it? *that man knew nothing of the play of "Hamlet", neither did his pal.* I felt myself a very spoon even in explaining to them—the plot and the meaning of the picture; and my soul fell down into my slippers to think that that man is the representative of a thousand such. Oh! were you to see the puzzled, unintelligent look he used now to throw on me, and then on the picture, and then on his *pal*, who only looked at the tip of my nose. I swear to you he never took his eyes off me, and, I believe, never saw the picture at all. As for the

nymph,[1] I took up Moore to read them a line in explanation; but I could not, and fairly laid the book down again and held my tongue. They asked me what the subject of the other was—"What's the subject?" So I said, "Oh! nothing more than you see." I want to tell you that I have made Hamlet handsomer, and, I am sure, taken every vestige of ——ism out of him. I have painted on it ever since, so you may make your mind easy on that. On Wednesday, and for the rest of the week, I go to the Academy to pass the pictures all day, from nine in the morning till twelve at night, save the hours of meals. Some day before you come to Town, I'll go down to see you for a minute, but I'll tell you beforehand. No, I will not; I'd find you immersed in books and papers and imbedded in a bedgown.

'Yours faithfully,

'D. MACLISE.'

Again, on the day his pictures were sent to the Academy, he writes:—

'April 5.

'My dear Forster,—My troubles are over; my pictures have been carted to the annual show. Macready called to-day, and really seemed most highly pleased. I told him you had come in to me, express, yesterday, and that you said you would not even call on him before you got virtuously back again; but he seemed to be aware of your stern resolves.

[1] 'The Origin of the Harp.'

'He did not see the least shadow of a shade of resemblance to the —— Hamlet remaining. The whole of this day I devoted to entirely altering the characters of the face, and I think I have succeeded in making it more up to the idea than it was heretofore. The Queen saw Macready act Macbeth last evening, and there was a fine house. He says, in his most enthusiastic way, that this picture will be the best answer to the critics. Troughton says it is the finest thing I have yet done. Here I am giving you a history of my triumphs without the excuse of magnitude or being on the other side of the Atlantic to make them interesting. I feel that you will wonder what can have overcome me to write to you two days running, and about nothing. It is wonderful. I allow it, and will not attempt to explain.

'Yours faithfully,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

'The Play Scene in "Hamlet,"'[1] was the leading attraction in the Exhibition. It illustrates the well-known passage in Shakespeare. Hamlet says: —

[1] When the 'Hamlet' first appeared in the Exhibition, the figure of Ophelia elicited some adverse criticisms, which were, perhaps, not entirely unfounded. Before it was submitted to the engraver by the proprietors of the 'Art Journal,' Maclise went over the entire work again. The figure of Ophelia was repainted; the expression of her sadness at her first suspicions of Hamlet's sanity is beautifully portrayed. The picture was engraved in 1862, and copies of it were presented by the proprietors of the 'Art Journal' to their subscribers. The picture is in the Vernon Gallery. The original study for the 'Hamlet' (30 in.

'There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pray thee, when thou see'st that act on foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul,
Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's smithy. Give him heedful note,
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face.'

It is not surprising that this work should have been considered as 'the finest thing the artist had done;' it transcends all his previous performances in grandeur of treatment and force and originality of conception. The audience occupy the foreground, whilst a crowd of armed men fill the extremities of the picture and add to the thrilling effect of the entire. There is a marvellous power exhibited in the disposition of the retiring figures; a blended expression of horror and astonishment is depicted in the faces of the audience as, with eyes riveted on the murderer, they watch him stealthily approaching the sleeping king and pouring 'the lep'rous distilment' into his ear. As one looks on this charming picture the whole scene lies mirrored before the eye with such ineffable force and fidelity that it is impossible not to surrender oneself for a moment to

by 20 in.), and which is most elaborately finished, is in the possession of Mr. Williams, Elm Tree Road, St. John's Wood; as a work of art it is fully equal to the larger picture.

the illusion that it is enacted by living and breathing beings. The accessories—armour, &c.—are rendered with extraordinary skill and minuteness.

His third picture exhibited this year was 'The Origin of the Harp,' a vividly poetical illustration of Moore's song, ''Tis believed that this harp,' &c.

It was a congenial subject for one in whose mind lay treasured up so many of the wild legends of his native land. The picture is a reflex of the beauty and purity of sentiment which the lines of Moore possess. The third stanza is that selected by Maclise for illustration :—

> Still her bosom rose fair—still her cheek smiled the same,
> While her sea-beauties gracefully curled round her frame,
> And her hair, shedding tear-drops from all its bright rings,
> Fell over her white arms to make the gold strings.[1]

The sea-maiden is seen standing at the entrance of a cave irradiated by the setting sun, the shining stalactites hanging from the roof, and forming a brilliant and picturesque framework round the

[1] Moore says, in reference to this song :—'When, in consequence of the compact entered into between the Government and the chief leaders of the conspiracy, the state prisoners, before proceeding into exile, were allowed to see their friends, I paid a visit to Edward Hudson, in the gaol of Kilmainham, where he had lain immured for four or five months, hearing of every friend being led out to death, and expecting every week his own turn to come. I found that, to amuse his solitude, he had made a large drawing with charcoal, on the wall of his prison, representing that fancied origin of the Irish harp which, some years after, I adopted as the subject of one of the melodies.'—*Life and Death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald*, vol. i.

figure. The dark blue sea-waves are seen behind and the sky above, the sunbeams stealing over and lighting up a part of it. The form of the siren is a beautiful conception; the limbs exhibit all the exquisite roundness and proportions of a statue, and the face is the incarnation of loveliness. A coronal of sea-flowers is wreathed through the dark shining tresses of the maiden, and imparts a picturesque and poetical character to the figure. This picture is at present in the collection of Allan Potter, Esq., of Liverpool.[1]

In 1843 he exhibited two pictures—

1. 'The Actor's Reception of the Author.'

Our Page came, and said aloud to his mistress, 'Madam, a man in marvellous foul linen, bedaggled all over, and who, so please you, looks very much like a poet, wants to speak with you.'

'Show him up,' answered Arsenia. 'Do not stir, gentlemen; it is but an author . . . .'

He advanced into the room trembling and confused, and let his gloves and cloak fall, which having taken up he approached my mistress and presented to her a paper. . . . She received it in a cold and disdainful manner, without even deigning to answer his compliment.—*Gil Blas*, vol. i. cap. xi.

2. 'Waterfall at St. Wighton's, Cornwall.'

In 1844 the Exhibition contained four of his pictures:—

1. 'Portrait of W. Harrison Ainsworth.'
2. 'Scene from Milton's "Comus."'

[1] Mr. Wyon, the eminent engraver, has been commissioned by the Royal Academy to execute a medal commemorative of Maclise. The subject on the obverse will be 'The Origin of the Harp.'

Sabrina, the nymph, releases the lady from the enchanted chair:—

> Brightest lady, look on me;
> Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
> Drops that from my fountain pure
> I have kept with precious care.

This picture was repeated, by command of Her Majesty, in the summer-house of Buckingham Palace. The building is of an octagonal form, ornamented in the arabesque style, and in each of the eight compartments a fresco painting was executed. The artists selected were Eastlake, Stanfield, Maclise, Uwins, Leslie, Sir William Ross, Landseer, and Etty. The frescoes were completed within the year 1844. They are all illustrative of Milton's work.

3. 'A Girl with a Parrot.'

4. 'Scene from "Undine."'

He received the following interesting letter this year, from his friend Macready (the great tragedian), who was then in America, on a professional tour, and with whom he had been for a long period very intimate:—

> 11 Warren Street, New York,
> 'May 14, 1844.

'My dear Maclise,—I cannot let the packet of the 16th leave these shores without carrying to you the expression of my most earnest thanks for the very friendly manifestation of your remembrance, which is reported to me in such enthusiastic terms from

home. To say I am gratified and obliged is really saying very little. If I had asked you myself to undertake the task you have so beautifully and so perfectly finished, I could not have experienced all the pleasure that the news of your freewill offering has imparted to me. In thanking you, as I do, I must beg that my words may be received for much more than their common meaning, and need I add what a delightful recollection your kindness will always be to me. I fancy that in Dickens's projected tour in Italy I see the shadow of a great man, with a palette in his hand, at Milan and Venice, Florence, Genoa, Naples, and Rome. As I am coming home very soon, I shall be sorry to find the places of so many of my friends unfilled; but I shall, setting my own selfishness aside, be glad to hear that you are the substance of what has obscurely appeared to me.

'I want Stanfield to come *here*. In the south, particularly, the trees have a sentiment or character in them. "They stretch their extravagant arms athwart the gloom," as if there was life in them. One might suppose them the pale encasings of some giant forms that the sorcery of some olden time had left as monuments of its power. They are subjects for a poet, and then there are skies of beauty and joyousness that cannot be surpassed in Italy. I have been going to write to Stanfield these several months, and perhaps shall number some more moons before I put the seal on my letter to him. I thought I

should have had ease and recreation *here*, but I seem doomed to the toil of eternal drill-serjeant-ship. I wonder Dante did not think of that amongst his punishments. But I have had glimpses of very grand and very pleasant things.

'I have mended one or two holes in my pocket, and have therefore, as Harley would say, "done" a little of the utile with the dulci. I am going once more to Niagara—the very word is a mountain. I shall hope to see you when the leaves are brown.

'Your attached and grateful friend,

'W. C. MACREADY.'

Count d'Orsay, who was at this time on terms of great intimacy with the artist, thus writes to him:—

'Gore House, Friday evening,
May 1844.

'My dear Maclise,—You behaved horridly ill to me for so many months. You *know* that I called twenty times at your house, and you did not return even one visit. Could you oblige me in coming to-morrow, after three, as I have something to show you, and hope to profit by your precious advice? You can also enjoy a little of the garden, which is in full bloom. Lord Chesterfield will be here.

'*Malgré tout*, I am always

'Yours most faithfully,

'C. D'ORSAY.'

CHAPTER VII.

Maclise visits Paris in 1844—Letters to Mr. Forster—He is selected by Fine Arts Commissioners to paint 'The Spirit of Chivalry'—In 1846, he exhibits 'The Ordeal by Touch'—A Parody, addressed to his friend Forster—In 1847, three pictures: 'Her Smile when Beauty granted,' 'Come, rest in this Bosom,' and 'Noah's Sacrifice'—In 1848, he exhibited four pictures—Letters to Forster, with Sketches—In 1850, 'The Gross of Green Spectacles,' and 'The Spirit of Justice'—In 1851, 'Caxton's Printing Office;' 'Portrait of Lord Lytton,' and 'Macready as Werner.'

HE was at Paris in the summer of 1844, from whence he writes the following interesting letter to his friend Mr. Forster:—

'Hôtel Corneille, Rue Corneille, Luxembourg,
'Monday, 23rd.

'My dear Forster,—Although I hope to see you very soon after this comes to your hand, I write just for the sake of writing from this place, and because I promised to do so, and because you would accuse me of not having done so; and, lastly and principally, because, although three weeks have only gone by since my foot pressed upon that venerable place whose area is, I have understood, exactly the size of the base, &c., I find a very great pleasure in holding even this sort of intercourse (a poor one, I think, always) with, almost, now my oldest friend. And

having said this, I might stop, but that I suppose you will expect me to try, in the manner of our gifted brother C. D.,[1] to convey to you impressions of my whereabout, and what-about. I am *au quatrième* in a small room in the above hotel, my bed in a recess at one end, and the casement opening from ceiling to floor at the other. It commands a view of the Odéon Theatre, which is on the opposite side of the narrow street, and at night I can see Messrs. and Mdmes. the *artistes*, in colloquy together, through the two or three windows, which are always open. On the left, I can see the principal dome of the Palace of the Luxembourg, and can be in the Gallery in 2½ minutes from my bedroom. I have a little bed, a little chair, a little chest of drawers, a big looking-glass, a large washing-basin, jug, and water-bottle; the room is surrounded by shelves for books, the floor is polished oak, laid down in a pattern, and this is, I believe, the exact model of all the rooms in the house; which is principally occupied by students of every grade and style, and of every profession—clerical, law-yal, medical, artistical. Each floor is served by a *garçon*, who is every man's factotum; he makes the bed, cleans the boots, brushes the clothes, stitches on buttons, and does everything that the necessities of fifty men require. Ah, if you could but see these men—some with the head shaved to the quick, and a beard and moustaches in one

[1] Charles Dickens.

bushy mass to the waist, others exactly the contrary, hair of the head never cropped, but allowed to flow all around, and a delicate moustache ending in a single hair curled up to the eyebrows, or in a melancholy and pensive twist to the chin.

'I fortunately got into the very next room to Joe, which was unoccupied, the tenant having just left the day before for his home in the country; this being, as in London, the very season when the town is most empty; and the first of September bringing out the sportsman from Paris as duly as the cockney from London.

'I breakfast and dine, and do all that I have to do, from home.' I am out from nine in the morning; I am choke-full up to my eyes in pictures; I never saw so much in all my life put together; it has taken me from ten in the morning till four in the afternoon, for three days together, constantly walking, to see the miles of canvas in Versailles. I have gone into all the churches hunting after dim old frescoes, and have found them rotting on dull and dark walls and in dingy domes. I have had a perfect surfeit of Art, and have once or twice sworn to myself to give up all thoughts of it, and not commit the sin of adding one more picture to the embarrassing number with which the world is laden. My belief is that we in London are the smallest and most wretched set of snivellers that ever took pencil in hand; and I feel that I could not mention a single name with full

confidence, were I called upon to name one of our artists in comparison with one of theirs. Most of the painters are in the country; nothing more easy than to have access to them. De la Roche is in Rome; H. Vernet is at his château; Schiffer is out of town. I have seen Winterhalter in his studio, and Eugène L'Ami, both in high fashion. Croni's friend could and would do anything and everything if I would let him; as it is, he has done a great deal; but a man can here do everything for himself. D. Roberts is here, and I have gone with him to many of the sights. I have met with my very next-door neighbour in Russell Place—Ward. Herbert has been here, and M. Jain and his wife, Bell the sculptor, Townshend, &c. I am about to start for Fontainebleau to-morrow; it is forty miles, but, I hear, is well worth the trouble. We went to the Fête of St. Cloud yesterday, and received splendid impressions of French character in every variety there; but I shall reserve all these things for your own private boredom. In the École des Beaux-Arts is the work of Paul de la Roche. I cannot say a word—it is impossible for me even to convey to you my admiration for that splendid work. I go to see it every day almost, and the guardian who shows it welcomes me and smiles at my enthusiastic admiration of it. I have given him so many fees for opening the door that he positively refuses now to take any more.

'My dear Forster, you know I am a wretched scribe.

Pray accept this, and excuse it, and believe me that I am, for ever and always,

Your attached friend,

'D. MACLISE.'

He was not an exhibitor in 1845. In the next year he contributed to the Competitive Exhibition—of Artists desirous of executing Mural Paintings for the decoration of the Palace at Westminster—his picture, 'Alfred in the Danish Camp.' It was selected by the 'Commissioners of Fine Arts,' and he was then requested to prepare designs for one of the subjects proposed to be executed in fresco. He produced his cartoon, with an oil picture of 'The Spirit of Chivalry.' The Commissioners at once requested him to paint this subject for the House of Lords, which he finished by the year 1847. The picture is a superb one; the principal figure—a beautiful female—represents 'Chivalry;' she is clothed in white, and standing on an altar-like pedestal, holding a wreath of laurel in her hand; around are seen figures personifying War, Religion, and Civil Government; on the right of 'Chivalry,' and as if awaiting her behests, stands a Warrior King, clad in a complete suit of armour, his visored bascinet decorated with a coronet. An archbishop is seen as the representative of Religion, with his hand on the altar, which he appears to be in the act of consecrating; near the latter is the figure of a statesman, repre-

senting Civil Government; all these are supposed to be typical of the rewards and honours that are to be achieved by true chivalry. Below this group a youthful knight is seen, in a kneeling posture, uttering his vow to the service of 'Chivalry;' he is attended by his page. The hand of the knight grasps his sword-hilt, expressive of his dedication of that sword to the service of God and his lady-love. 'A Dieu et aux Dames'—the ancient legend—is traced on the sword-belt, illustrative of the spirit of Chivalry in the middle ages; at either side of the knight are several figures, introduced to associate the personification of chivalry with the intellectual, imaginative, and emotional influences. The Painter, the Poet, the Sculptor, the Philosopher, and the Architect are seen; the latter figure offering the model of a building; the Bard, enwreathed with ivy, exciting Youth to deeds of high emprise by his strains, and the gay Troubadour, with his lute, sitting at the feet of his lady-love—a charming figure; a Palmer from Palestine, clad in the sombre garb of a pilgrim, holding his cross aloft; the Historian and the Poet, crowned with bays, exhibit an opened book, from whose pages future times must acquire knowledge of the spirit and the deeds of Chivalry. This work was so highly approved of by the Commissioners that they entered into an agreement with the artist for the execution of the

corresponding fresco—'The Spirit of Justice'—as will be hereafter seen.

Although his great fresco would be presumed to have absorbed every moment of his time up to the year 1847 (when it was finished), he still contrived to produce a picture, the appearance of which, in the Exhibition of 1846, excited great interest. The subject was 'The Ordeal by Touch;' the idea was borrowed from an observation of Sir Walter Scott, who says, 'The belief that the corpse of a murdered man would bleed at the touch, or at the approach of the murderer, was universal amongst northern nations.'[1]

This is truly a magnificent performance. The subject was one in which the power of the artist in delineating human emotions, and their different phases of expression, is fully illustrated. The scene

[1] Another description of 'The Ordeal by Touch,' is well known to have prevailed in Ireland many centuries since. The proceeding adopted for the detection of criminals in those rude times was this: A silver casket, richly ornamented with precious stones, supposed to contain portions of the true cross and of the sponge presented to the Redeemer on Calvary, was kept in the Abbey of Kildare, and when a serious crime was committed in any part of Ireland, and remained undetected for a specified period, this casket was placed in the charge of three monks of the abbey, and brought by them to the parish where the outrage was perpetrated. The casket was placed on the altar during the celebration of Mass, and just at the elevation of the Host every human being in the parish (over a certain age) was compelled to approach the altar, and, laying his or her hand on 'The Donagh' (as the casket was termed), solemnly asseverate their innocence of the crime; if guilty, the belief prevailed that the culprit would be stricken dead on the spot. There is an interesting story in 'Carleton's Tales' founded on this legend. The original 'Donagh' is now amongst the rare collection of antiquities possessed by the Royal Irish Academy.

is intensely interesting; the High Priest and the Knights, Jurors and Peasants, are grouped with a propriety and skill quite wonderful—it is a drama of thrilling interest depicted on canvas.

Mr. Dickens was in Paris in the year 1847, and Mr. Forster had arranged with Maclise to make a visit to their friend in January. It was with great reluctance he relinquished what would have proved a source of intense enjoyment, with such intellectual companions, but his engagements pressed so heavily on him at this moment as to preclude the possibility of accompanying Mr. Forster. He thus gives expression to his disappointment:—

My dear Forster,—

Go where pleasure waits thee,
But while it elates thee,
Oh! remember me.

When by the Seine thou rovest,
With the friend thou lovest,
Oh! still remember me.

When through the Louvre gazing
On those works amazing,
(Especially) *Then* remember.

When Dumas thou meetest,
And Jules Janin thou greetest,
Even then remember me.

If Sue or Victor Hugo,
George Sand or Kock, to you go,
Still, still remember me.

If Horace, Paul, or Airy
You meet, oh! still be wary;
Forget not Mac—and me.

In Père La Chaise while walking,
O'er Montmartre whilst stalking,
Be sure remember me.

While you hear the Pairs debating,
While you hear the Communes prating,
Even then remember me.

On top of Vendôme column,
On July's pillar solemn,
Even then remember me.

On Notre-Dame's high towers,
Versailles and St. Cloud's bowers,
Still, still remember me.

When with Dickens thou art dining,
Think of him at 14 pining,
Oh! *do* then think of me.

When with him Lafitte drinking,
Let not your spirits sinking,
On Lincoln's Inn then thinking,
A tear bedew your e'e.
Be not such foolish asses,
But while the bottle passes,
Fill full your sparkling glasses,
And *then* remember me.

'There! after the exhaustion consequent on such an effusion, I can only wish you a happy trip. When Spronfin asked me to dine he held out no inducement, he said "quite alone;" but I secretly vowed I would not go. *Au revoir.*

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

In 1847 he exhibited three pictures in the Royal Academy.

1. Is illustrative of a passage in one of Moore's 'Melodies:'—

Her smile when Beauty granted,
I hung with gaze enchanted
Like him the sprite,
When maids by night
Oft meet in glen that's haunted.

This was a favourite subject of his; when a mere boy he made several sketches illustrating these lines. [See also his exquisite outline in the edition of Moore's 'Melodies,' published by Messrs. Longman, in 1846.]

2. This is also selected from Moore's 'Melodies':—

Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,
Tho' the herd have fled from thee, thy home is still here.

3. 'Noah's Sacrifice':—

The ark rested on Ararat.
The bow is set in the cloud.
Genesis vii., viii., and ix.

This is a very noble work. When it first appeared it elicited very much hostile criticism, but, however, as it became familiar to the public, its beauties brought back the art critics to a juster sense of its merits, and it is now considered one of Maclise's best pictures. In the centre of the foreground stands Noah with upturned eyes; he holds in his hand a golden censer, from which the incense is exhaling, his left hand is upon an altar where a bleeding kid is being burned. On the right hand of Noah are his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and on her knees is seen their mother, her face expressive of mildness

and devotion; on the left of the Patriarch are the wives of his sons, looking with reverential awe upon the sacrifice. The background discloses a view of the Ark resting upon the summit of Ararat. Around the feet of Noah are animals which have been slain for oblation; a flight of birds is seen ascending from the Ark, and issuing from its portal a long line of beasts is seen descending the Mount.

The picture has been engraved (very beautifully) by Simmons; the artist received a large sum for the copyright.

In 1848 four pictures appeared in the Exhibition.

1. 'Chivalry in the time of Henry VIII.'

A knight is being armed by his esquires for the combat; he holds a two-handed sword of the period. The principal figure stands in the foreground, leaning on his formidable weapon, whilst his attendants stand round with portions of the armour. A stooping female figure appears on the left of the knight, lacing some part of the equipment.

All the details are faithfully rendered—the armour and breastplate of the warrior disclose all the elaborate ornamentation of the period. The figures on the breastplate are in rich relief, contradistinguished from the more modern embossed style. Every part of this splendid performance displays the proclivities and excellences of the artist. The grand figure of the knight standing erect—the faultless drawing

and the rich picturesqueness and profusion of the accessories.

2. 'John Forster in the character of Kitely,' in Ben Jonson's 'Every Man in his Humour.' (Act ii. Scene 1.)[1]

3. 'Portrait of Mrs. Charles Dickens.'

4. 'Outlines to illustrate Shakespeare's "Seven Ages."'

These drawings were originally intended for the embellishment of a porcelain card-tray; they are boldly and beautifully drawn, and vividly realise the descriptions of the great author. The drawings were made in accordance with the earnest request of some eminent persons interested in the development of art manufacture in England: for some unexplained reason this purpose was not carried out, and the drawings eventually came into the possession of the 'Art Union,' who purchased them for 160*l.*; they were engraved by Goodall, and distributed amongst the subscribers.

As an instance of the readiness with which he recognised excellence in a brother artist, he thus writes in reference to a cartoon by Mr. Cope, R.A., to be painted in fresco for the Palace at Westminster:—

'August, 1849.

'My dear Forster,—Even that roguish praise of

[1] This picture is in the collection of his friend Mr. Forster, for whom it was painted.

yours cannot inspire me more than this. There is a most graceful and gallant prince in the centre of the cartoon (it is but a drawing as yet), who is in the act of delivering his sword to an attendant, in acknowledgment of the grave authority of the Chief Justice, Gascoigne, seated on the bench, high in the composition; the other hand is in action expressive of allaying the impetuous interference of some two or three of his gay companions and followers, who rush forward to draw their swords. A very picturesquely

conceived figure of the chief culprit stands with head declined before the judgment-seat, his hands bound behind him, and the rough arm of force laid on his shoulder; officials are there, and an interested throng; above all, it is learnedly drawn and poetically designed, and suited admirably for the monumental character of fresco art. It, as well as mine, will make a good architectural balancing composition in the two side compartments, making the centre pictures of no importance to the uniform effect. Of course I only mean that the eye seeks its compensation from the pendent masses of the side pictures, and, whatever the centre is, it stands alone. I put this to the architect long ago, and said it was in our power to make an harmonious effect still, when the question

was first mooted of one mind being necessary to suggest the general design.

'Ever most truly yours,

'DAN. MACLISE.'

He began at this period to feel the effects of his incessant labours at the easel, and was for some days seriously ill. Dickens, who was not aware of his illness, had complained to his friend Forster that Maclise was forgetting him, and he thus writes:—

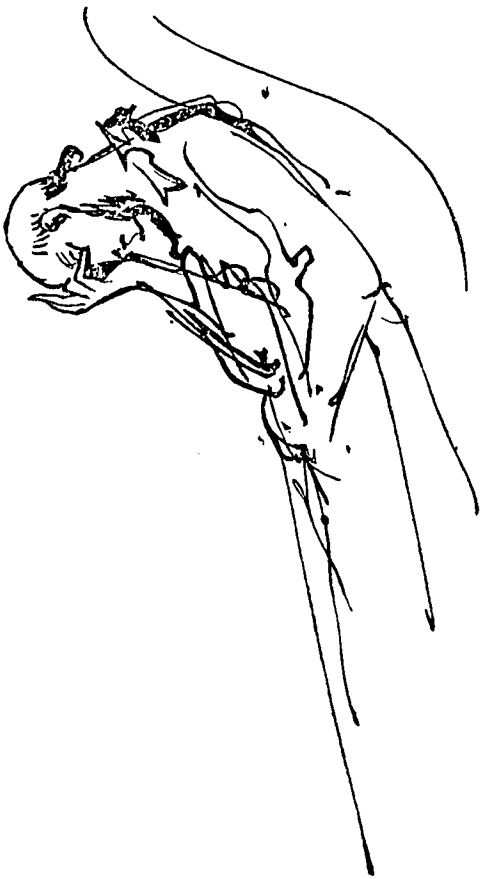
'My dear Forster,—You cannot conceive how much you astonish me—even in this room by myself, with no spectators. I am going through all actions of amazement. Surely all excuses are contained in the one fact of my not having been able to go out from illness. I expected Dickens here days before Christmas, and I left off writing to say how ill I was, even to the last expecting to hear from him. It so happens that I wrote him a note last evening, upbraiding him slightly for not having enquired after me. I am really and truly unwell; it may be hypochondria, a return of my old ailment, but I am prohibited dining out. I did not tell you what I told him—*that I fell down at the door of my painting room*, and have had the most unquiet nights from palpitating fevers, and I am lowered to nothing. I look like the "Banished Lord," by Sir Joshua, or

Macready as Werner, from not having shaved during a fortnight. Here I am—

But "I'm better now," as Charlie says: I'll make a point of calling on Dickens to-morrow. I would to-night, but I know I should spoil sport. Did I not refuse Stanfield, ditto Talfourd, ditto Stone, Cattermole, Birch, King, and Thomson, for only the same reason? I am very sorry to hear of your not having been well. Pray excuse me to Dickens, and tell him I never meant anything. I hate anybody to be offended with me as much as I never wish to offend anybody. Ever yours, 'DANIEL MACLISE.'

In another note, written during his illness, he says:—

'O brilliant Hughes! who from his vociferation must be the original "Bal Hughes," I imagine you and Dickens on the breezy heights of Hampstead to-day, while I——



'remain, my dear Forster,

'Yours very faithfully,

'D. MACLISE.'

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He was preparing by hard work for the next Exhibition, although he was still far from well. He again writes to his friend:—

'My dear John,—I laugh at you and your Spicers. *I* did not send them out to you. I certainly told them you were at a picturesque cottage in a green lane somewhere in the country of Jack Sheppard. I'll say of myself that I have not been outside the door *since I saw you* but once of a night at Macready's, and *that* was only to excuse myself for not dining another day. I am medicining almost every day, and painting by day and by night—God knows to what purpose. My whole nose is one red, fiery mass, arising from a fluid boil that has engendered on the very tip. I have had it a week; all the blood of my body seems exhausted to furnish the damned expenditure of this bloated spendthrift. I shall not send these pictures away until Tuesday evening, so that perhaps you may like to call and see the large one; but do not put yourself out of the way, for it is not worth the responsibility of bringing you in from pastoral Willesden to look upon this. I wish I could write to Dickens; he has written a mere word to me—nothing worth sending, I mean, in the way of news. I half suspect you of leading a jolly life out there with Ainsworth at all hours. I'll engage you make now and then a descent on Macready, and I suppose you were at George Cattermole's christening party. Seriously, I hope you have

found your project of seclusion answer, and that you will come out with an astounding volume this

season. I hope, by the fresh poultice I am about to put to this nose of mine, that I may be able to get

it under before I see you. Fancy painting *inspired* pictures with your nose in a bag.

'Ever yours, my dear Forster,

'D. MACLISE.'

In 1849 he did not exhibit. Two pictures appeared in the Exhibition of 1850:—

1. 'The Spirit of Justice.'

This is the original study in oils designed for the fresco executed in the House of Lords. The figure of Justice occupies the centre of the picture; she stands under an arch, which is supported by emblematical pillars, holding the scales of Justice, and on either side are seen the Angels of Mercy and Retribution. Directly in front of the angels, and on a level with the Tribunal, are seated the Judges, lay and ecclesiastical. Near the Angel of Retribution stands the guilty one and the accuser, the latter exhibiting a blood-stained knife as the evidence of guilt against the culprit. Beneath the Angel of Mercy are the widows and orphans protected by their armed champions. In front a negro kneels, newly liberated from his bonds, and a free citizen, also bending before Justice, unrolls the charter of Liberty. This was, up to the period of its appearance, the greatest achievement of the artist. In sublimity of conception, boldness and freedom of execution, and in the sentiment that touches and the grace that enchants, no work of any British artist

can be said to transcend it. The principal figures are Justice, Retribution, and Mercy. The face of Justice, sternly beautiful, seems illumined by the light of heaven itself, and the eyes are lustrous with celestial intelligence. The Angel of Retribution stands near, austere and inexorable; whilst Mercy, whose features beam with benignity and gentleness, seems pleading for the guilty one. The splendour of the accessories and the exquisite finish and minuteness of the details are wonderful. The drawing is perfectly faultless, and all the figures disclose a profound knowledge of the structure of the human body. It is impossible not to feel impressed with something like awe as one looks on this great work; it elevates the mind into a region of thought at once grand and sublime.

2. 'The Gross of Green Spectacles.'

'I have brought back no money,' cried Moses; 'I have laid it all out in a bargain, and here it is!' —pulling out a bundle from his breast—'here they are: a gross of green spectacles with silver rims and shagreen cases.' 'A gross of green spectacles!' repeated my wife in a faint voice; 'and you have parted with the colt, and have brought us back nothing but a gross of green spectacles.' 'Dear mother!' cried the boy, 'why won't you listen to reason? I had them a dead bargain, or I should not have bought them.'

1851. In this year he exhibited three pictures:—

1. 'Caxton showing his Printing Press to Edward IV. in the Almonry at Westminster.'[1]

2. 'Portrait of Sir E. Lytton Bulwer, Bart.'

3. 'Macready, in the character of Werner.' (Act i. Scene 1.)

A distinguished author thus writes to him:—

'My dear Mac,—You asked me for a Shakesperian idea; here it is—A booth in a country fair; Othello, Falstaff, Cordelia, Juliet, &c., appealing to an uproarious British public on behalf of their poet. A mulberry tree hanging over part of the stage. A Britannia with a bust of Shakespeare in her right hand. Ariel introducing subscribers with bank notes, and Puck seated at a desk writing receipts for them. Beefeaters blowing trumpets, &c. &c.'

[1] This picture is the property of Mr. Forster. It was lent by that gentleman for the Great Exhibition of 1862, and appeared in the Art Gallery. It is by a large section of art critics considered as the best of Maclise's performances in oils.

CHAPTER VIII.

In 1852, Maclise exhibited 'Alfred, the Saxon King, disguised as a Minstrel, in the Tent of Guthrum'—Letter of the Artist—Perceval W. Banks—In 1854, 'The Marriage of Strongbow and Eva' was exhibited—Description of the Picture—Letters of Sir C. Eastlake—Correspondence on the subject of Mural Painting at Westminster Palace—In 1855, Maclise exhibits 'Orlando about to Engage with Charles the Wrestler,' from 'As You Like It.'

1852. 'ALFRED, the Saxon King, disguised as a Minstrel, in the Tent of Guthrum the Dane.'[1] This was the only picture he exhibited this year. Within the tent is Guthrum, surrounded by his chiefs, who are dallying with the belles of the Danish Court. In the front, on one side, is a group of reckless and savage soldiers, who are gambling. In the very midst is Alfred; the calm, yet indignant, spectator of the orgies. This work possesses, in a prominent degree, the minuteness of detail and splendour of the accessories which characterise all the martial pictures of the artist.

Mr. Perceval Weldon Banks, the brother-in-law of Maclise, died in 1850. Maclise, who was his executor,

[1] This picture previously appeared in the Exhibition instituted by the Commissioners of Fine Arts, and it procured the selection of Maclise to paint the fresco for the House of Lords, 'The Spirit of Chivalry.'

thenceforth took on himself the charge of Mrs. Banks and her children, and managed their affairs. Amongst the assets of Mr. Banks[1] was some land situated in the North of Ireland.

A local agent was employed by Maclise to superintend the property and receive the rents for the benefit of his sister and her children; it became a question whether it should be sold, or that some money should be expended on it, as it was out of condition. Property in Ireland was at that period in a most depressed state—one of the first results of the Act, which had then recently passed, 'For the Sale of Encumbered Estates in Ireland.' I dissuaded him from a sale at that moment, and he thus writes to me:—

[1] Banks was one of that brilliant circle of literati that illumined the pages of 'Regina' ('Fraser') from the year 1829 to 1835. A sketch of him will be found in the clever cartoon by Maclise placed next the title-page in 'Reliques of Father Prout.' The cartoon contains likenesses of Maginn, Irvine, Southey, Barry Cornwall, Ainsworth, Serjeant Murphy, Hogg, Thackeray, Macknish, Coleridge, Churchill, Galt, Jerdan, Crofton Croker, Lockhart, Dunlop, Hook, Mahony (Prout), Gleig, Sir E. Brydges, Carlyle, Cunningham, and Creazy; they are represented sitting round a dinner-table. Prout says, in the preface to the last edition of the 'Reliques:' 'But it is his (Maclise's) great cartoon of writers, in 'Fraser,' anno 1835, that will most interest coming generations. The banquet he has depicted was no fiction, but a frequent fact in Regent Street (212). Of these twenty-seven only eight are now living.' Since then (1859) many more have disappeared from the scene; the only survivors are W. H. Ainsworth and Carlyle. The other sketches that appeared in the numbers of 'Fraser' published during the above years composed 'The Gallery of Literary Characters.' The text was from the pen of Maginn, and sufficiently pungent and personal to warrant the suppression of the writer's name, who was otherwise, however, well known to the readers of 'Fraser' by his poetical and prose contributions.

'14 Russell Place, Fitzroy Square,
'October 28, 1852.

'My dear O'Driscoll,—I was quite sure that you would arrange that small affair, for my sake. My sisters are both pleased by your recollection of them. The question for us (Mr. E. will explain to you) is whether a *hut* is to be repaired or let to a Doctor McA——, who lives next door. It is but a matter of 5*l.* or 6*l.* a year; perhaps it would be worth while to build a better one on the spot. I wish "Ardee," or "Atherdee," as it is sometimes more gracefully spelt, were placed on the sea somewhere—"Lower Road," "Monkstown," or "Granite Stairs," where —— and L—— took such sublime leaps into empty space, to my horror, when I was last in Ireland—would I not then build a small (it should be a very small) retreat, and go there once a year, as to a Tusculum!

'Believe me very faithfully, &c.,
'DANIEL MACLISE.'

He adopted my suggestion, not to sell the property at that time, and he refrained from doing so until very long afterwards.

In 1853, he exhibited no pictures at the Academy.

In 1854, one picture, 'The Marriage of Strongbow and Eva.' It represents the nuptials being performed under the porch of a ruined church, with its round tower. The scene is laid in 1171, the Vigil of Saint Bartholomew. This is one of the grandest of

Maclise's works. The Commissioners of Fine Arts requested him to reproduce it in *buon fresco*, for a compartment in the Conference Hall at Westminster Palace: they thus refer to it in their Report of 1854: 'We further propose to commission Daniel Maclise, R.A., to paint in fresco, in the Painted Chamber or Conference Hall, "The Marriage of Strongbow and Eva;" the subject being selected by us for that apartment. The design for the fresco so to be executed will be adopted, according to the requirements of fresco, from an oil painting of the same subject, executed by that artist on his own account, and which he has treated with great ability.'

It was said that Maclise sought to be released from his engagement, in consequence alone of the unfavourable character of the light in the apartment for such a work. It would appear, however, from the following correspondence with the Secretary of the Commissioners (Sir C. Eastlake), that no engagement was ever entered into on the subject, and that one of the reasons why the picture was not executed was that the artist refused to accept the sum offered by the Commissioners, as wholly insufficient for the performance of such a work. Sir Charles Eastlake thus writes to Maclise:—

'7 Fitzroy Square, May 2, 1854

'"My dear Maclise,—As it is quite possible that the question of placing your picture in some other room

may be entertained, I wish to be clear about the price: I have, as I told you, assumed 1,500*l.* As the matter will probably be settled on Friday in some way or other, I wish to have your distinct sanction for naming that price. *So moderate a sum* for such a picture might be taken, as I have already stated, only in the event of the picture being purchased by the Nation.

'In order to be prepared for every proposal, I shall therefore be glad if, in addition to the estimate for painting the Conference Hall in fresco, you would name the price for the single oil picture as it is.

'Most truly yours,

'C. L. EASTLAKE.'

To this letter Maclise replied on May 3, stating 'that, under any circumstances, he would decline to undertake the execution of the work, if it were to be placed on the *west* side of the Painted Chamber, as the light was wholly unsuited and insufficient for such a picture in that position: that, as to the price, he presumed the Commissioners had considered that question, and he would prefer that they should themselves intimate what they conceived would be an adequate sum, and afford him the opportunity of considering whether he should accept it or not.'

The Commissioners then addressed a letter to Maclise, through their Secretary, of which the following is an extract:—

'That the Commissioners, highly admiring the conception and general treatment of the picture, consider that the execution of the same subject in fresco would be more suitable to the position which they originally designed for it in the Painted Chamber, and it is their wish that he should undertake the same in fresco, at the price of 1500*l.*

'That Mr. Maclise be further informed that, on the completion of the work, the Commissioners would be happy if it should be in their power to confide the execution of other works in the same chamber to him.

(Signed) 'C. L. EASTLAKE.'

It is believed that Prince Albert did not approve of the offer of the Commissioners, and suggested that a far larger sum should be mentioned for the execution of a work of such magnitude; but the Commissioners named 1500*l.*, and it so remained.

Maclise promptly replied, declining the offer as wholly inadequate, and repeating his objection to the west side of the chamber.

The Commissioners again write on May 20, 1854, and transmit a copy of their resolution on the subject:—

'Resolved,—That the Commissioners much regret the decision at which Mr. Maclise appears to have arrived in declining the offer which they had made to him; and likewise regret their inability, according

to their views, to alter the terms of the offer, as already made, save only as to the particular compartment—namely, the north or south instead of the west side—of the Painted Chamber on which the proposed fresco might be executed.

(Signed) 'C. L. EASTLAKE.'

This resolution was accompanied by the following letter from Sir Charles Eastlake to Maclise:—

'7 Fitzroy Square, May 20.

'My dear Maclise,—As in your letter of the 8th inst. you were considered to decline the offer of the Commissioners, the terms of the resolution are framed accordingly. The alternative in the offer leaves it, however, quite open to you to accept the commission if you choose. It is understood that the execution of the whole room in fresco would be as certainly confided to you, if after having painted one subject you wished to proceed, as in the case of other artists similarly commissioned. The division of the compartments on the north side will be restored, so as to repeat those on the south side.

'Most truly yours,

'C. L. EASTLAKE.'

The Prince Consort was desirous that the Commissioners should re-open negotiations with the artist, in the hope that an arrangement might be made by which the nation would possess this picture. The Tenth Report of the Commissioners was pub-

lished long after the dates of the above correspondence, and it will be seen that the passage in the Report having reference to the picture of the 'Marriage of Strongbow and Eva' assumed that an agreement with the artist would be eventually made. There is no doubt, however, that it was not entered into; the negotiations came to nothing, and the entire matter fell through.

In 1855 one picture appeared in the Exhibition, 'Orlando about to engage with the Wrestler.' The scene is from the First Act of Shakspeare's 'As You Like It':—

Orlando. I beseech you punish me not with your hard thoughts, wherein I confess myself much guilty to deny so fair and excellent ladies anything. But let your fair eyes and gentle wishes go with me to my trial: wherein, if I be foiled, there is but one shamed that never was gracious; if killed, but one dead that is willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have nothing; only in the world I fill up a place which may be better supplied when I have made it empty.

Rosalind. The little strength that I have I would it were with you.

Celia. And mine, to eke it out.—Scene 2.

The scene represents the Lawn before the Ducal Palace; the usurper Frederick and his Court are assembled to witness what Touchstone terms 'Sport for Ladies,' which consists in 'the breaking of ribs.' The principal figures in the foreground are the Duke, and near him is Charles, his wrestler; Orlando, who is about to engage in the wrestling-match with Charles, and the Princesses—Rosalind, daughter of the banished Duke, and Celia, daughter of Frederick.

The Princesses are endeavouring to dissuade Orlando from entering on the unequal contest, but he persists, and asks them not to punish him with their hard thoughts for his denial of their request. The Wrestler stands, with folded arms and an air of defiance, waiting for the approach of Orlando. He is an authentic type of the hired bravo, and exhibits the muscular and well-developed limbs, low forehead, and square jaws which distinguish pugilists. The graceful form and intelligent features of Orlando delineate his character; he is but a very stripling in comparison with the giant athlete whom he is to encounter, but his well-knit and flexible limbs and his modest bearing, blended with a certain expression of calm determination, are in strong contrast with the boastful mien of his antagonist, who asks, 'Where is this young gallant that is so desirous to lie with his mother earth?' Touchstone (the Duke's jester) sits at the feet of Celia; he suspects that his mistress is more than ordinarily interested in the fate of Orlando, and his sly glance upwards at Celia, as she entreats Orlando to refuse the encounter, is singularly expressive. Nothing can be more perfect than all the details of this charming picture. The rustic seat of the Wrestler, formed of twisted branches of the oak-tree, is a perfect marvel of artistic skill.[1]

[1] This picture is in the possession of H. L. Betts, Esq., of Maidstone. The 'Art Journal,' having purchased the copyright, published, in 1868, a very fine line engraving of it, which was given to their subscribers.

CHAPTER IX.

'Peter the Great'—'The Poet to his Wife'—Maclise devotes himself to Frescoes—Illustration of Moore's 'Melodies'—The Poet's Appreciation of the Work—Description of a few Illustrations—Sale of the Original Sketches—The Artist's Opinion of their value—'The Norman Conquest'—Portraits of Lord Lytton and Charles Dickens—Letter of Thackeray to Maclise—'The Pilgrims of the Rhine'—'The Nymph at the Waterfall'—'Salvator Rosa offering his Picture for sale to a Jew Dealer'—Letter of Lady Morgan—The Late Prince Consort, Chairman of Commissioners of Fine Arts—His Exertions in reference to the Wall Painting at Westminster Palace—The Peers' Robing Room—Peers' Corridor—Queen's Robing Room—Royal Gallery—Correspondence of Maclise and Sir C. Eastlake on the Subject of Frescoes—Agreement with the Artists.

THE authorities of the Great Exhibition which took place at Paris, this year (1855), selected Maclise as one of the Fine Art Jurors. He left London in the month of June to enter upon the duties of that office. He went from Paris in July, accompanied by his brother Joseph, and travelled over the Continent. He visited the galleries of Florence, Munich, Milan, Naples, and Rome. He thus writes to his friend Mr. Forster, from Naples:—

'Hotel de Russie, Naples,
'Sunday, July 29, 1855.

'My dear Forster,—I received your little note the very morning I left Paris for Lyons. The Jury for Fine Arts had only two meetings, and the assembly

was told by Count de Morny, its president, that it would not be required to meet again before October, and even another postponement may be necessary. All I did was to look out for notable works, and make certain annotations, and even little rapid sketches, serving better for me than a long note, to recall the pictures. Lord Elcho and myself went every day, for about a week, through the galleries in this way; he returned to England, and I went off the other way. This summary break-up of the Jury left me sooner than I expected without occupation, and, having again made myself familiar with all the old sights and scenes of Paris, there was nothing left for me but to leave for Italy—a great deal too soon, as every person told me, and as I have since found to my dismay; for, oh, the heat is beyond mortal endurance. It is impossible to exaggerate its effects, and I feel at this moment that I cannot write to you of any one topic but it. Joe joined me in Paris, and we went away by rail to Lyons; stopped there three days, and took the diligence across Mont Cenis to Turin, meeting, you may be sure, all sorts of odd adventures, seeing new sights every mile to two such unpractised travellers as ourselves, and enduring hardships, the greatest of all in not having a wink of sleep for three nights, and by day sitting in a coupé, that seemed to centre in itself all the converging rays of a burning sun, like a lens. Turin, three days; rail to Genoa, four days; did

palaces, churches, museums; found out the Peschiere, and an old man who knew Dickens, and was eloquent though not intelligible to us in his mingled French and Italian praises of him and his family. The Palazzo, one of the most beautiful amidst numbers of great beauty, is now set and named, on the façade, Italian College. We then left for Carrazas. The whole town, the hotel, the street, one blaze of light; a very Koh-i-Noor of a town, reflected from glaring white marble everywhere, and up to the knees in burning lime-dust. My eyes!—an appropriate exclamation—will never again recover their well-known power. We walked up into the quarries, and slaked the lime-dust into mortar, all the way, by rills running off from our distilling bodies; our guide, a certain Giulio Merli, who boasts of having conducted Dickens, Mrs. Dickens, and Georgina up the same place, asking me if I knew him, and saying that he attended Chantrey and Thorwaldsen, Gibson and Westmacott, and Monsieur Flesher; above all, this last, Flesher, seemed to have made the greatest impression on him. We got off from him with the never-failing fleecing, and came to Lucca in a vettura, and again fifteen miles in the same to the Baths, and thence to Leghorn; and although I avoided the sea, contrary to the advice of everyone, hitherto, I at length, influenced by the endurance of all sorts of annoyances, took the French steamer that leaves Marseilles, touching at Nice, Genoa, Leghorn, Civita

Vecchia, and Naples, and, after two nights and two days and more of nausea, here we are, I am delighted to say, at the farthest point, for I am awfully afflicted with that *mal du pays*, that home-sick feeling, that ever seizes me when I leave England. Having hitherto "dragged at each remove the lengthening chain," I am now almost happy in having come to the last link, and my spirits rise a little at the thought of each day's journey bringing me somewhat nearer home. Joe and I ascended Vesuvius yesterday; we got up at four in the morning, had a voiture waiting, went five miles to the base, then took two horses to the base of the burning cone, and made the ascent—one to me (who have had some experience of Ben Nevis, Cruachan, and Lomond as a pedestrian) of the most wretched distress—over burning cinders and clinkers, and boulders of pumice-stone, that rolled away from beneath the foot at every step. I rejected all offers of assistance in my pride, and would not hear for a moment of laying hold of a leathern kind of girdle strapped round a meagre old Italian, who offered the assistance. At length the top was gained, and I grovelled amid hot ashes, hot from without and within; tried to eat the boiled egg—boiled in a hot hole, from which, as well as from all the craters about, of which we inspected four, issued clouds of sulphurous smoke, that made us both cough and sneeze—and drank (in water brought up for the purpose) a bottle of ordinary wine. To give you an

idea of my exhaustion, it will only be necessary to say that I rejected the refreshment the moment I took it, and began to fear I must give in; however, after resting an hour, almost, I felt able to propose the descent, and plunged down, through ashes every step knee-deep (no exaggeration), which came rolling with us like a river, and filled my boots so closely that if it only cohered would have taken a complete mould of my foot and shin. I fell twice, splitting my check trousers at the knee, and cutting the same, over the bone, very severely. Joe, who has ten years' advantage, only appeared distressed by heat—in that respect he is as great a sufferer as myself. The Cavalli were waiting the voiture still further below, and after all we had pluck enough to visit Herculaneum Theatre and City; but I was in such a state of fever as to be obliged to sit down in a dark and classic apartment, on the ground, and try to recover. Arriving at our hotel at four in the afternoon, we shut the light out and *fell* upon the bed. Uneasily I slept till ten last night, could not eat, drank a bottle of ale (Bass)—which the waiter brought me with a look of encouragement—and went to bed again. And now I write to you all this personal matter, reserving anything I may have to confess to you on topics of Art, &c., till we meet; feeling, too, that you would rather hear of me, than if I were able even to interest you in deep observa-

tions. I shall make the usual excursions in the neighbourhood, and stop between this and Rome in two places. I dare not ask you to write, for I know not where I shall be, and *poste restante* is an uncertainty. And now for a bath in the bay.

'Good-bye, my dear Forster.

'Ever believe me yours,

'D. MACLISE.'

In 1857, he exhibited two pictures, viz., 'Peter the Great working as a Shipwright in Deptford Dockyard,' and 'The Story of the Norman Conquest.' The series of sketches designed to illustrate 'The Norman Conquest' are forty-two in number, some of them elaborately finished.[1] The most remarkable are: 'Harold and the Saxons Confined in the Castle of Benurain, near Montreuil;' 'Guy of Ponthieu Giving Audience to Harold and his Companions;' 'Harold Receiving the Submission of Conau, Earl of Bretagne;' 'William Conferring upon Harold the Dignity of a Norman Knight;' 'Harold's Oath of Fidelity to William, sworn over the Concealed Relics of the Saints;' 'Tostig,' defeated in his attempt against Harold, flies in his Galley from the English Coast.' He has himself said of these drawings that they were executed at irregular intervals during the leisure of his evening hours. They appeared on the walls of the Academy in the year 1857, and were

subsequently exhibited in the upper rooms of the French Gallery, Pall Mall. In the story which the artist tells with his pencil there is a beautiful blending of history and romance: were it possible to interweave with the fascinating fabric of Lord Lytton's 'Harold' the stern realities of the same period described by Lingard, these splendid drawings would form an attractive set of illustrations to the work. In his treatment of the several subjects, the artist has sustained his high reputation for grandeur of conception, inventive genius, masterly and effective grouping, and unrivalled dexterity of hand.[1] In addition to all these, Maclise produced within the same period (i.e., from the time when he exhibited his first picture in the Academy down to 1859) a prodigious number of works of every description—portraits of distinguished persons; amongst others, Lord Lytton, Charles Dickens, Forster, Kean, Macready, &c., as well as illustrations of various works in prose and poetry, viz., 'The Pilgrims of the Rhine,' and other books by the same author; 'Keepsake,' &c., &c. He also painted for his friend Dickens 'The Nymph of the Waterfall.' It represents an Irish girl, with a pitcher of water, borne on her shoulder, which she has just taken from a stream

[1] These outlines were exhibited in a separate room at the Royal Academy. The proprietors of the 'Art Union' having obtained the right to have them engraved, the work was confided by them to Mr. Louis Grüner; these engravings were published by the proprietors, and sent to their subscribers.

at the foot of a mountain, down the face of which the torrent is rushing, intercepted in its descent by the projecting crags and gnarled branches, which break it into a succession of falls. The features of the nymph are inexpressibly sweet; her dress—that of a peasant girl—is simply but tastefully arranged, falling in graceful folds, and disclosing the beautiful symmetry and proportions of the figure. She stands on a stepping-stone covered with moss and river verdure; the feet are bare, and her shoes are seen on a rock, where she has left them to ford the stream. All the details—trees, rocks, and water—are rendered with extraordinary minuteness and most picturesque effect. This work was engraved for the 'Art Journal,' and was distributed by the proprietors to their subscribers in 1848.[1] He produced within the same period a singularly clever picture, 'Salvator Rosa offering one of his Works for sale to a Jew Dealer.' The subject was suggested by the following passage in Lady Morgan's 'Life of Salvator Rosa':—

'In the earlier part of his career the far greater portion of his pictures were painted on primed paper, his limited means not permitting him to purchase canvas. These were sold to the Jew dealers, who kept stalls in the Strada della Carita.' The scene is represented in the boutique of an old Jew. The young and

[1] Mr. John Forster became the purchaser of this charming picture, at the sale of Mr. Dickens's effects after his death, for six hundred and ten guineas. He also possesses a very large number of studies and finished drawings of Maclise.

graceful painter stands watching with anxious looks the face of the Israelite, who, with his bony hand shading his eyes, is minutely scanning the picture. In the background is a figure of a beautiful girl, the daughter, who is reaching down the miser's money-box from the top of a 'buffet;' whilst thus occupied she contrives to steal a sidelong glance at the handsome artist. The principal figures are so disposed that the picture tells its own story. The background displays in exuberance the miscellaneous contents of the Jew's shop, disposed with the happiest effect.

He did not exhibit in 1858.

In 1859, his Picture of 'The Poet to his Wife' was the only production of his that appeared in the Gallery—

> 'Oh! could we do with this world of ours
> As thou dost with thy garden bowers—
> 'Reject the weeds and keep the flowers—
> What a Heaven on earth we'd make it.'
>
> *Moore's Melodies.*

The lady is seen in her garden. She holds in her hand a branch of fuchsia, from which she is pulling the faded leaves and flinging them into a basket. The poet stands beside his wife, addressing her in the words of the song. Flowers of every description are seen, delineated with extraordinary fidelity and skill. This was the last performance of the artist that appeared in the Exhibition up to the year 1866.

The interval was devoted exclusively to his drawings for the grand frescoes in the Royal Gallery, which will be hereafter referred to. The list of his exhibited pictures forms but a very limited proportion of his productions down to this period.

The eminent firm of Longman & Co. commissioned him to execute the well-known illustrations of Moore's 'Melodies.' To an artist less gifted with imaginative powers, facility of invention, and celerity of hand, these elegant compositions would nearly absorb a lifetime. The illustrious author of the Melodies—then in his sixty-sixth year—gave eloquent expression to the delight he felt at seeing these records of his genius enshrined in lineaments as beautiful and imperishable as the songs themselves. The early associations of Maclise, his love of legendary literature and romance, the wonderful exuberance of his intellect, uniting at once versatility and depth of feeling; his genius assuming every form, and traversing every region of thought that could manifest its power, eminently qualified him for an undertaking which probably could not have been so felicitously achieved by any other living artist. The native airs of Ireland are as touchingly tender and sweet as the national music of any other country in the world; but a wild irregularity pervades many of them, which obeys no rule of rhythm or counterpoint. Moore himself has said that he was compelled to exercise extraordinary ingenuity in effecting an har-

monious union between the words and the music of his Melodies. Perhaps the same observation may be applicable—*mutatis mutandis*—to the difficulty of assigning to the pencil the task of interpreting the poetry. It is evident, however, that Maclise, in these illustrations, has proved himself the twin star of Moore, in one sense; and the artist must participate, to some extent, in the immortality of fame which the poet has won by lyrics of such original and surpassing beauty.

The volume enriched with these etchings is the most exquisite specimen of an illustrated work that has yet appeared in England.

It would be a difficult matter to endeavour to select, where all are so beautiful, the sketches which appear the most striking. A very charming one is the illustration of 'Erin, the tear and the smile in thine Eyes.' The rays of a glowing sunset are falling on the figure of a female weeping over a harp; above her hangs the rainbow—the arch of peace—the blending of whose 'various tints' the poet yearns for as the advent of his country's happiness. The illustrations of 'Remember the glories of Brien the Brave' occupy three pages of the book. In the first 'the warrior king' is seen at the head of his martial host, leading them against the enemy; the second page represents a richly-ornamented shield, surmounted by a garland of trophies; and the third

reveals the position of the archers in the act of discharging their arrows.

'Rich and rare were the gems she wore.'

This is a clever sketch; a half-figure of great beauty, with 'love-darting eyes' and 'tresses like the morn,' is seen on her pilgrimage.

'Here's to her who long had waked the Poet's sigh,
The girl who gave to song what gold could never buy,'

is a very highly-wrought drawing; the illustration refers to the lines—

'With golden key Wealth sought
To pass, but 'twould not do;
While Wit a diamond brought,
Which cut his bright way through.'

Beauty is within a trelliced bower, archly glancing through 'the door of glass;' Wealth is seen on one side, holding a heavy purse and a key; on the other side, Wit, in the guise of a graceful figure, is applying his diamond to the glass. All the accessories of this drawing are elaborated with great skill.

'The origin of the Harp'

is nearly the same in design as the picture in oils. It is remarkable for the curiously minute details; rendering by force of the chiaroscuro all the effect that colour imparts to the larger work, in the delineation of the shells scattered round, and the

graceful wreaths of seaweed which hang over the figure.

'Oh! the sight entrancing.'

A phalanx of armed warriors 'with helm and blade and plumes in the gay wind dancing.'

The principal figures in the foreground are clad in complete armour, every portion of which is minutely wrought; in the distance is seen a martial host advancing to the fight, armed with spear, and shield, and sword, and buckler.

These sketches, 160 in number, appear to have been in the possession of the late Mr. Grundy, of Liverpool, until the year 1865, when they were sold by auction, with a large collection of articles of virtu. I was asked by an ardent lover of the Fine Arts to ascertain from Mr. Maclise if the drawings advertised for sale were the original ones made by him for Longman & Co., and also what might, in his apprehension, be the value of them. The subjoined letter came from Maclise in reply:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.,
'November 22, 1865.

'My dear O'Driscoll,—The drawings you refer to were made for Longman & Co., and I never heard of their passing into the possession of anyone else; but I know the name of Grundy, and I cannot doubt the drawings being genuine.

'With respect to their value, or what they may *fetch*, so to speak, I have not an idea. Many of

them are very light things, as well as I can recollect, and all I can say is, they ought not to be in any degree high priced.

'Believe me, *mon cher*,

'Ever faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

The gentleman who desired to possess the drawings entrusted the auctioneer with a commission to purchase them for a sum which, from the modest estimate placed by the artist on these beautiful creations of his genius, would appear to be a very large price; it appeared, however, that they realised more than four times the sum he had named.

The authoress of 'Salvator Rosa' writes the following note to the artist, in 1857: —

'11 William Street, Belgravia.

'Lady Morgan presents her compliments to Mr. Maclise, and assures him that she is much flattered by her friend Mrs. Challoner (Miss De Salis) intimating to her Mr. Maclise's desire to renew the acquaintance which she had the pleasure of making through the medium of his noble picture from her "Salvator Rosa." Lady Morgan will be most happy to receive Mr. Maclise any Sunday afternoon, from four to six o'clock.'

Mr. Thackeray, who was an old friend of Maclise, sends him the following humorous note: —

'Wednesday, March 10, 1857.

'My dear Maclise,—Although, from the melancholy state I left you in on Sunday evening, you must have quite forgotten your promise to dine with me on Monday next, yet I, for one, will never shrink from my engagements; and, in reminding you that the promise was made on your part, beg to state that the dinner is deferred until further orders. Ainsworth and "Boz" won't come, and press for delay. Well! then, although I know, from the state of the banker's account at present, next week there will probably be about five shillings wherewith to buy a dinner, yet let them have their will.

'Something tells me that it may be long before the banquet in question takes place—but it is their wish—so be it. The greatest of all the names of Allah (Goethe says) is "AMEN." Mind you be punctual at seven.

'Yours as ever,

'W. M. THACKERAY.'

It will be necessary to return to the period when his appearance as an annual exhibitor in the Academy was interrupted by his engagements in connection with the frescoes in Westminster Palace. A select committee was appointed by Parliament, in the year 1841, 'To take into consideration the promotion of the Fine Arts in this country in connection with the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament.' This com-

mittee published a very able report, prepared by their accomplished secretary, Sir C. L. Eastlake, the greater part of which is devoted to the subject of fresco-painting, and the difficulties which our climate presents to its successful development in reference to wall-painting. Sir Charles Eastlake was peculiarly well qualified to prepare such a report. He had obtained very much information in the practice of fresco from Peter Cornelius, the German historical painter, who visited London in 1841, and Sir Charles had himself experimented to a large extent in that particular branch of the art. In the appendix a large mass of valuable evidence is collected, embodying the opinions and suggestions of the most eminent men of the day. The result was the appointment of a Royal Commission, to which Sir Charles Eastlake was appointed Honorary Secretary. It was presided over by His Royal Highness the late Prince Consort, whose cultivated mind, refined taste, and enthusiastic love of the Arts contributed so conspicuously to the attainment of its purposes. It was very much to the exertions of the illustrious president, who had himself studied and experimented on the system, that the application of the stereochromic method of wall-painting at the Westminster Palace is attributable. His premature death interfered with the full accomplishment of the original recommendations of the Commissioners, and produced the rescission of the agreement made with Maclise—a wrong which

would not have been permitted if Providence had spared the life of this illustrious Prince. The precise circumstances that served as a flimsy pretext for the perpetration of a great injustice have not been publicly known. It will be proper, in order to appreciate the manner in which Maclise was treated, to give a short *resumé* of all the facts. The Royal Commission, appointed in 1841, assumed the direction of the entire of the Art works at Westminster Palace. They published from time to time reports (thirteen in number); it will, however, be only necessary here to refer to those in direct connection with the wall-paintings in the Palace, and the agreements made with the artists for the decoration of the several compartments in—

1. The Peers' Robing Room.
2. The Peers' and Commons' Corridor.
3. The Queen's Robing Room.
4. The Royal Gallery.

1. The Peers' Robing Room.

In July, 1850, an agreement was entered into between J. R. Herbert, R.A., and the Commissioners, by which that artist undertook to fill the compartments in the Peers' Robing Room with nine fresco-paintings, for the sum of 9,000*l.* (i.e., 1,000*l.* for each), to be finished in ten years from April 1, 1849.

2. Peers' Corridor and Commons' Corridor.

In July, 1851, an agreement was made with Mr. Ward, R.A., to decorate with oil-pictures the Commons' Corridor, at 500*l.* for the first picture, and 450*l.* for each remaining picture. A similar arrangement was made with Mr. Cope, R.A., in June, 1853; but, in 1857, the agreements with these artists were modified by substituting frescoes for oil-paintings; and the price for each picture was augmented from the sum of 450*l.* to 600*l.*

3. The Queen's Robing Room.

In July, 1849, the late William Dyce, R.A., agreed with the Royal Commissioners to paint in fresco seven compartments in the Queen's Robing Room, together with twenty-eight smaller compartments (in the frieze), for a sum of 4,800*l.*; the works to be fully executed within seven years from the date of the agreement. The Commissioners subsequently increased the remuneration of this artist to the sum of 5,600*l.*, in consequence of having discovered an excess in the wall-space over the estimated measurement.

4. The Royal Gallery.

In July, 1857, Sir Charles Eastlake (Honorary Secretary to the Royal Commissioners) addressed a letter to Mr. Maclise, desiring to know on what terms he would undertake to execute a series of fresco-

pictures for the decoration of St. Stephen's Hall. It appears that the artist, having examined the apartment, was impressed with the idea that the light was wholly insufficient, and unsuited to the proper execution of the work, and declined to accept the commission. Some correspondence then ensued as to the decoration of the Royal Gallery.

The inception of the contract with Maclise, in reference to the paintings to be executed by him in Westminster Palace, is to be found in a letter addressed to Sir Charles Eastlake: —

'14 Russell Place, Fitzroy Square,
'July 14, 1857.

'Dear Sir Charles,—I have to ask you to be so kind as to submit, from me, to Her Majesty's Commissioners of Fine Arts, a proposition for which I am anxious to obtain their favourable consideration. Having found on enquiry that the subjects selected to be placed in the Royal Gallery at Westminster have yet in no way been appropriated, and hearing that an opinion had been expressed that the time had arrived when these subjects might be proceeded with, I venture to request, through you, that I may be permitted to undertake the execution of them in fresco, in accordance with the plan laid down in the Report. The various compartments reserved for them in the Royal Gallery I have within the last few days carefully examined. I have convinced myself that the subjects embraced in this particular

series are those which I might hope to execute more worthily than any other still unappropriated; and if the Commissioners accede to my proposal, I am prepared, henceforth, to devote myself to the work until the whole of it shall be accomplished. Permit me to add that every other consideration connected with the proposition thus submitted to Her Majesty's Commissioners I regard as subordinate to the hope and ambition with which I should enter upon it—of so carrying it to completion as to justify the confidence which may be reposed in me.

'I remain, dear Sir Charles, yours truly,

'D. MACLISE.'

To this letter the Secretary (Sir Charles Eastlake) replied, on February 17, 1858, referring to his communication to Maclise of July 6, 1857, and reminding him that he had omitted to mention anything definitive about the series of frescoes which the Commissioners desired to have executed in St. Stephen's Hall. The artist, on February 18, thus explains the omission:—

'14 Russell Place, Fitzroy Square,
'February 18, 1858.

'Dear Sir Charles,—You have called attention to my not having answered your letter of July 6, 1857, in which you ask me, on the part of the Commissioners, if I would undertake to paint the series of frescoes proposed for St. Stephen's Hall in the

Palace of Westminster. I am quite annoyed that I should have betrayed this more than usual unclerklike failing, for which I beg you will accept my apologies. I can only account for the omission in my note of July 14th by supposing that in the earnest expression of my desire to be allowed to execute the works in the Royal Gallery, as containing subjects, on the whole, more interesting to me than those in St. Stephen's Hall, and in the hope of being thought worthy to undertake which I felt willing to devote myself exclusively, I neglected to refer to the particular subject of your letter. Begging you to receive this as my excuse,

'I remain, dear Sir Charles, yours faithfully,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

Sir Charles Eastlake to Mr. Maclise.

'Palace of Westminster, February 24, 1858.

'Dear Sir,—Having on the 20th instant laid before Her Majesty's Commissioners on the Fine Arts your letter, dated July 14 last, together with that dated the 18th of this month, I am directed to acquaint you that, subject to the sanction of the Treasury and the House of Commons, the Commissioners approve of the proposal, submitted in your letter of July last, to undertake to paint in fresco the subjects for the Royal Gallery in the Palace of Westminster. The Commissioners understand it to be your wish that the lower series of frescoes in the Royal Gallery, thirteen in number, exclusive of the two of large

dimensions, although not in chronological order, should be undertaken before the upper series, six in number. In this view they are disposed to acquiesce, but they are of opinion that the subject first mentioned by you should be one of the ten referred to, and *not* one of the *two* intended for the large compartments.[1] The Commissioners leave it to you to select any one of the ten subjects you may prefer. The thirteen compartments in question vary very slightly in size; but, in accordance with your instructions, I have stated to the Commissioners that you are ready to undertake to paint those compartments at 1,000*l.* each, and that your estimate for each of the two large compartments, each measuring 45 feet 8 inches in length, is 3,500*l.* Considering the magnitude of the scheme, as regards labour and cost, and the impossibility of assigning any probable time for its completion, the Commissioners think it would not be advisable to submit the whole plan and estimate to Parliament for approval or rejection. They have, accordingly, only recommended, at present, that one of the ten frescoes referred to should be committed to you, at the price of 1,000*l.* When you have selected a subject the Commissioners request that you should submit a sketch of the composition before the cartoon is completed.'

[1] It will be seen that the Commissioners, for some reason which did not then appear, altered this arrangement, and desired that the *two* large pictures should be first proceeded with, i. e. 'The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher after the Battle of Waterloo' and 'The Death of Nelson.'

CHAPTER X.

Cartoon of 'The Meeting of Blucher and Wellington'—Address of all his brother R. A.'s, with a Gold Porte-crayon—He finds Buon Fresco unsuited to the purposes—Alteration of the Artist's Plans—Letters of the Late Prince Consort, with a Diagram—Maclise's Interview with H. R. H.—Stereochromy—Maclise visits Berlin at the instance of the Prince—Experiments of the Prince Consort—Correspondence on the Subject of the Frescoes—Blucher's Forage-Cap Sketch—Reports of the Commissioners, Messrs. Dyce, Ward, and Cope—Letters of Maclise—Design for a Medal to commemorate Turner for the Royal Academy—Maclise refuses remuneration—The Academy presents him with an Address and Vase.

THE cartoon was commenced in March, 1858. The enormous space required for the picture (45 feet 8 inches) compelled him to divide the work into compartments; and these were separately executed on the wall of his drawing-room, at Russell Place. When all the compartments were finished they were skilfully joined together, and presented an unbroken surface, as the cartoon now appears. His scrupulous accuracy in the most minute details is manifested in the work. All the uniforms of the leading generals were copied from coats, caps, and arms actually worn in the field on the day of the battle. His friend, Sir Charles Eastlake, afforded him great assistance in his researches. There was some un-

certainty existing as to whether Blucher wore the hat and feathers of a field-marshal or a plain forage cap; and Sir Charles, having written to Germany for information on this point, received a communication from General Nostitz, an extract from which he enclosed to Maclise in the following letter: —

'7 Fitzroy Square, June 23, 1859.

'My dear Maclise,—I send you a translation of the most important part of the information upon Blucher and the Prussians at Waterloo. It comes from General Nostitz, who was the aide-de-camp of Blucher at the battle, and had saved his life, on the previous day, at the battle of Ligny. Enclosed is a sketch of the iron cross worn by Blucher round his neck, within the collar of his coat, on the day of the battle.

'Yours ever faithfully,

'C. L. EASTLAKE.'

General Nostitz says: 'During the whole of the campaign, and also at Waterloo, Blucher wore the undress frock-coat of a general, and the common military forage cap: so did Guiesenau. I wore the coat and cap of the aide-de-camp's uniform. Blucher rode a bay horse, Guiesenau a chestnut one, I a bay one. The drawing of the cross is the same size as the original. The ribbon is black, with white margin. The cross is black iron, with a silver margin.'

His Royal Highness the Prince Consort — who

exhibited intense interest in the progress of the cartoon—possessed a portrait of Blucher in his full uniform, which he sent to Maclise, to assist him in painting the Prussian Commander. Maclise thus refers to it in a letter to Sir Charles Eastlake: —

'Russell Place, Fitzroy Square, June 29, 1859.

'My dear Sir Charles,—The Prince yesterday sent me the picture I wanted to see, and, having *wafered* a piece of paper over Blucher's cocked hat and feathers, I contrived to draw the forage cap; not such a one as His Royal Highness first imagined, but one less common, and exactly like the one the hero wears in the picture.[1]

[Here the artist gives a spirited little pen-sketch of the head of Blucher, with the forage cap, as it appears in the cartoon and the fresco.]

[1] The cartoon, which is now the property of the Royal Academy, is placed in the New Building, late Burlington House; it will be readily perceived, as the fact is, that Blucher was originally drawn in a field-marshal's cocked hat and feathers. This has been cut out of the cartoon by the artist and the *forage cap* substituted.

'I am not at all sure you will like it; Draycott tells me *not one* of the Commissioners he has lately invited has been to inspect the cartoon.

'I remain very faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

The cartoon was completed in July 1859, and its appearance created astonishment and admiration. The learned and the unlearned in the art were equally charmed with it; but perhaps the truest and most touching tribute to his genius was the presentation to him by his brother artists, 'in and out of the Academy,' of a massive gold porte-crayon, with the following address:—

'DANIEL MACLISE,—

'We send the accompanying trifle for your acceptance, not so much as a token of our esteem and admiration as of the honest pride which, as artists and fellow-countrymen, we feel in the success of the cartoon you have lately executed. We add our hearty wishes for your future welfare, hoping that you may enjoy health and happiness to complete the work you have commenced so well.'

This address was engrossed on a sheet of vellum within a circle, and circumscribed, in the manner of what is popularly known as a 'Round Robin,' were the following names:—

Charles L. Eastlake	C. Stanfield
Richard Redgrave	P. MacDowell
F. R. Pickersgill	J. C. Horsley
John H. Foley	John P. Knight
John D. Lumd	A. Johnson
Richard Doyle	George Jones
Thomas O. Barlow	Thomas Ford
Holman Hunt	C. W. Cope
Charles Barry	Francis Grant
Richard Ansdell	Frank Stone
Alfred Elmore	Augustus Egg
Thomas Brooks	Thomas Creswick
Y. Mitchell	A. Rankley
H. O'Neill	Charles Landseer
William Boxall	A. E. Chalon
David Roberts	W. Mulready
W. P. Frith	E. M. Ward
John Phillips	John Thomas
S. A. Hart	H. Weeks
W. Calder Marshall	A. Elmore
George F. Watts	Edwin Landseer
Henry O'Neill	

When he commenced the fresco in the Royal Gallery he had serious misgivings regarding the eventual success of the work. Cross-lights flashing through the stained-glass windows, and reflecting their colours on the compartment, filled him with doubt and apprehension as to the effect they might produce on his work. He would have felt no difficulty had he to paint the subject in oil-colours, even under the disadvantage of false and unfavourable lights; but he was literally dismayed when, after some weeks of intense application, he found the difficulties he had foreshadowed revealing themselves as he advanced. He resolved on relinquishing the

task, and wrote the following letter to Sir Charles Eastlake:—

'August 5, 1859.

'My dear Sir Charles,—There are many reasons why I regret that I have to make the present communication to you, but the chief one is that I fear it may not meet your approval. I have been for the last fortnight making experiments on the space intended for the fresco of Wellington and Blucher, and I find so many difficulties would interfere with the proper execution of the work, that without enumerating them I have found them so powerful as to send me home every day disheartened and distressed, and in a mood that has certainly suggested to me the propriety of writing you a note to say that I find myself under the necessity of resigning the commission to paint certain frescoes in the Royal Gallery. I may just say that it has only been when I actually commenced the work that the difficulties appeared so insuperable as utterly to prevent my achieving a satisfactory result.

'Believe me, my dear Sir Charles,

'Most faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

This was followed by a letter addressed to Sir Charles Eastlake in his official capacity of Secretary to the Royal Commissioners:—

'14 Russell Place, Fitzroy Square,
'August 8, 1859.

'My dear Sir Charles,—In a former note I gave you some general idea of the difficulties that had occurred from the very commencement of the fresco of the "Meeting of Blucher and Wellington on the Field of Waterloo," and, as I thought they must necessarily increase as I advanced in the work, I felt it my duty to state to you that I was most unwillingly compelled to give up the attempt.

'Will you permit me to particularise a little, and inform you that, from the very nature of the composition in question, an insuperable difficulty would arise out of the complication of the joinings in the superadded plaster of each day, which would never admit of a simple line, and, in consequence of the numerous details all over the design—of trappings and military decorative forms—would only admit of a very inconsiderable portion being completed in each day, and thus cause the joinings to be at once so intricate as to make an obtrusive display of a process at best but a feeble one, and exhibit a miracle of mosaic and a triumph of patchwork and plaster—if of nothing else—asserting its limits in a circumference of white lime hereafter to be painfully "stippled" *à tempera* into unison with the rest. I found also, when I was engaged in the completion of the cartoon temporarily placed in the Royal Gallery, that the quantity of light was so subdued

as scarcely to permit of my drawing in black and white; but it was only when I began the fresco, and attempted to use colour, that I was painfully áware of the impossibility of success. When the sun did *not* shine I could barely see, and when the rays entered at a particular crisis of the day's work the heraldic devices of the stained-glass windows—griffins, dragons, and all—in gules, and gold, and azure, were emblazoned in form and colour over the forty-six feet of compartment, shaming and falsifying, in their dazzling passage over them, my poor earthy, lime-burnt tinges. Even if the painted glass were removable, the architectural forms of all the windows are traced in sunshine and shadow on the walls. My own profile is sharply defined exactly over the portion I am engaged upon, and, as the "Times" of Saturday last says, "daylight itself is cut with mullions and cinque foils." Driven from the wall, as it were, and disheartened by the above and other considerations—thinking, also, that if I could get rid of the necessity of the daily joining process it would be a great advantage—I had a small panel prepared in plaster, and made an experiment (a vain one) with the water-glass. The result, arising partly from the same limited range of colours as in fresco, was a mere dry and meagre piece of distemper painting, readily removable by sponge, or coming off in a powder when touched, and exhibiting all the arid, opaque, and granular

qualities of the fresco process in exaggeration. In this hopeless state with respect to processes and obstructions of light and situation, I would ask if I might not be permitted to paint the subject in oil-colour; it might be treated, if deemed necessary, so as to reflect or shine as little as De la Roche's picture in the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and the darks so managed as to tell sufficiently without the enhancement of a glistening surface. I would propose to paint it—indeed, I think it could *only* be painted—elsewhere than on the wall, where it would finally be placed, executed in compartments, like its cartoon, and on wooden panels morticed together, of a more genuine integrity than lath and plaster, and rigidly sustained in its place—perpendicular—so as not to make any architectural irregularity. With many apologies for this redundant letter,

'Believe me, dear Sir Charles,

'Your very faithful servant,

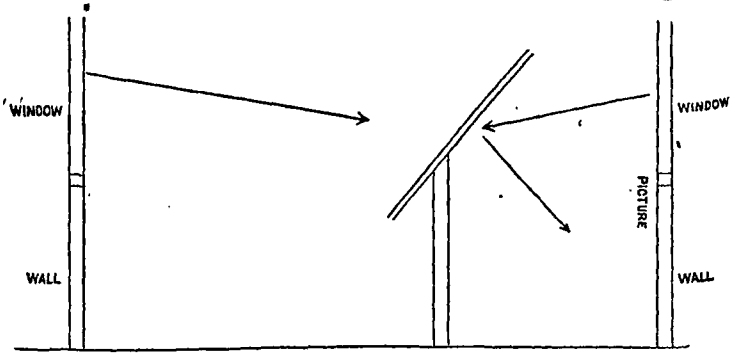
'DANIEL MACLISE.'

This communication caused Sir Charles Eastlake great anxiety. He foresaw the extreme disappointment the Prince Consort would feel at the announcement, and he endeavoured by friendly remonstrances to induce Maclise to retract his resolution. Having failed in his efforts, he had no alternative left but to transmit the letter to His Royal Highness, as Chairman of the Commissioners. It elicited the following reply from the Prince:—

'My dear Sir Charles,—I am very much grieved at the letter which I received from you yesterday, enclosing that of Mr. Maclise. The spot which is to be decorated by painting absolutely requires *monumental treatment*; and, feeling this, the Commissioners selected the style of fresco, and we have evidence of Mr. Maclise being master of it in his former works. All organic substances, like oil and wood, ought to be eliminated, as too perishable for a monumental work. Moreover, the wood would be certain to warp and twist, and the forty-six feet in length would in a short time have the appearance of so many broken bits, each of a different plane. The oil, however flattened, would shine and be most disagreeable. If Mr. Maclise feels disgusted at the dry and rigid materials for his production, and longs for oil, it is because he feels pain in the struggle to have cast away the peculiar means of producing effects *in finishing up minute details in which he knows he excels.* But a grand historical work requires the sacrifice of these details; and fresco is a protection to Mr. Maclise against himself, and insures his rising by this work to a height as an artist which he cannot himself comprehend as yet. Try to inspire him with the prospect of this great result, and to make him endure the penance and artistic fasting which are to ensure him the entrance into the artist's paradise—*fame.*

'All you can do to facilitate this I am sure you will; *the stained glass should be taken out of the win-*

dows, and a white surface placed in a direction similar to what I try to indicate in this sketch. [The Prince here gives on the page a clever diagram (in pen and ink), showing the points from whence the light



should fall on the picture, unintercepted by the stained glass, which would necessarily transmit coloured rays, and thus falsify the entire effect.] This sheet would intercept the light of the *opposite* windows (to the picture), and reflect the light of the windows above it in a uniform style.[1]

'Ever yours truly,

'ALBERT.'

[1] Mr. Gullick, in his admirable work, states: 'We have been assured it was the avowed intention of the late Prince Consort to recommend that the emblazoned windows should be done away with, and the light let to fall on to the pictures.' The letter of His Royal Highness vindicates the correctness of that statement. Maclise assured me that the Prince had definitively arranged for the removal of the stained glass, when his death intervened. The Commissioners, however, turned a deaf ear to all the remonstrances of the artist when the distinguished President was removed by death. See, also, Mr. Gullick's Book, page 27, for the present effect of these stained-glass windows on the pictures.

His Royal Highness was so anxious that Maclise should alter his determination not to proceed with the work, that he left Osborne for London next day, and had a private interview with the artist at the Royal Gallery at Westminster. He discussed the matter in a kindly and anxious spirit, and requested him to look over a pamphlet written by Doctor Fuchs, of Munich, on 'Stereochromy.' This was the first time the subject of water-glass painting was mentioned by the Prince. His Royal Highness came again on the next day to the Royal Gallery, and expressed his earnest desire that Maclise should undertake a journey to Berlin for the purpose of satisfying himself as to the suitability of the stereochromic method to mural paintings.

The Commissioners met, and a resolution was passed requesting Mr. Maclise to visit Berlin, and any other places he should think desirable, in reference to the object of his journey, and they named a sum of 80*l.* to defray his expenses. His Royal Highness having left town, the resolution was transmitted to him by the Secretary, Sir Charles Eastlake, and the following letter from the Prince was written in reply :—

'Osborne, August 16, 1859.

'My dear Sir Charles,—Your letter followed me to the Channel Islands. I am glad to see from it that Mr. Maclise will reconsider his decision, and give us a chance of possessing his great work. I did

not mention the water-glass further, because I was fearful of increasing his doubts. The report on that style of painting will be valuable to art in general, and to our Commission in particular. There must be plenty of students of Kaulbeck at Berlin, should *he* be absent, whom "Waugin" could point out, and who would be well able to explain the process. I think Mr. Maclise should receive 100*l.* (and not 80*l.*) for his journey, to be paid out of our funds for "Sundries." I have obtained here at Osborne very good results with passing silicate and water, mixed half and half, over common distemper painting, rendering it hard and washable. If it came to the worst, this would be an easy mode for Mr. Maclise to execute his work. All that would be required would be the avoidance of organic (viz., vegetable or animal) colours, and an adherence to the list of colours in the little pamphlet by Fuchs.

'Ever yours truly,

'ALBERT.'

Maclise left London for Berlin in the latter part of the month of August 1859, and remained abroad for some time, obtaining information from all available sources on the system of stereochromy as adopted by the artists of that country. He was wholly unacquainted with the German language, and would have found his mission a most unprofitable one, but for the opportune presence of Lady East-

lake in Berlin, who most kindly acted as interpreter between Maclise and the fresco painters, and helped him to acquire very much of the information which he afterwards embodied in his Report to the Commissioners.

This Report will be found in the Appendix. It is prepared with extraordinary ability, and is considered one of the most valuable acquisitions to the artists who have since then executed mural paintings in the Palace at Westminster.

The first part of the Report bears date December 1859, but he continued, through the friendly medium of Sir Charles and Lady Eastlake, to correspond with the most distinguished of the Berlin artists who had made the stereochromic process their peculiar study, and in March 1861 he produced the second part of his Report, entitled 'Notes added after the practice of Stereochromic Painting of a year and a half.'[1]

The Report is illustrated with sections and diagrams of the various apparatus required in the application of water-glass to wall paintings.

Before he had intimated his wish to be relieved from the performance of his agreement, a part of the fresco work, as has been already stated, had been painted. When he returned from Berlin he came to

[1] Mr. Herbert, the painter of the 'Moses' fresco, made further experiments in the stereochromic method, which induced him to adopt some modifications of the systems of Fuchs and Kaulbeck, to which he refers in his very interesting letters of January 16, 1864, addressed to the Royal Commissioners.

the conclusion that the stereochromic process could not be successfully applied to this finished portion; he therefore wholly effaced what had been done, and commenced *de novo* his wonderful performance.

The Council of the Royal Academy were desirous of paying some tribute of respect to the memory of the well-known J. M. W. Turner, who died in the year 1853. A meeting of the Academicians was held in the early part of 1859, at which it was resolved unanimously, that Maclise should be commissioned to execute the design of a medal. The drawing was speedily prepared, and, the Academy having approved of it, Wyon—the eminent engraver—was employed to produce it in gold and bronze, and it was finished in December 1859. Maclise thus writes to Sir Charles Eastlake:—

'14 Russell Place, November 24, 1859.

'My dear Sir Charles,—I have seen an impression of the Turner medal, which, I think, looks very well, and Mr. Wyon only waits for the inscription to be placed under the medallion portrait of Turner in order to complete his task. Perhaps you will enable the Secretary to furnish this after the next meeting of the Council. I have just received the enclosed note from Petenkoffu, of Munich, in answer to certain enquiries of mine, but, from the apparent heaping up of German terms of the Laboratory *on* the German itself, it is all "Greek" to me. Perhaps at your leisure you will peruse it. With respect to

that astonishing piece of MS. of mine, it appears to my recollection, just now, so redundant that I think it may be fairly reduced to twenty lines. Perhaps it will be thought that the length of my voyage in quest of the water-glass method seemed to require a corresponding treatment.

'Believe me faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

When the medal was finished, the Council of the Academy met and voted a considerable sum to Maclise for his part of the work; but he thus communicated to the Secretary his resolution not to accept of any pecuniary remuneration:—

'Dear Sir,—Believe me (and assure my brother Academicians) that I have never thought for one moment of making any charge for the design of the medal, and that I shall be more than repaid by having this slight service accepted by the Academy.

'Yours faithfully,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

The Council, however, at a meeting held on January 11, 1860, 'being of opinion that they could not allow such a signal service to pass without some recognition, and as Mr. Maclise's letter precluded the idea of any pecuniary remuneration, it was resolved unanimously, that Mr. Creswick and Mr. Smirke be appointed a committee to select a piece

of plate to be presented to Mr. Maclise;' and on March 6, 1860, at a general assembly of the Academy, the President, in the name of the Academy, presented to the artist a superb oxydized silver vase, with a suitable address, and for which he returned thanks.

The vase, which is from a design of Benvenuto Cellini, stands on a pedestal of black marble, covered with a glass shade. In the front of the pedestal a silver shield is inserted, on which is engraved—

'From the Royal Academy of Arts,
'To Daniel Maclise, R.A. 1860.'

This testimonial is in the possession of Mrs. Banks, the sister and executrix of the artist.

CHAPTER XI.

Fresco of 'The Meeting of Blucher and Wellington' completed—Portrait of 'Copenhagen,' the Duke's Horse—Description of the Picture—Report of Commissioners of 1861—Death of the Prince Consort—A great loss to Literature and Art—Controversy as to the historical fact of the Meeting of Blucher and Wellington—Letter of Her Majesty to the Crown Princess of Prussia—Letter of General Nostitz, the Aide-de-Camp of Blucher, setting the question at rest—Correspondence of Messrs. Herbert and Maclise with the Commissioners—Mr. Herbert's picture of 'Moses'—Royal Commissioners appointed to report on the state of the Wall-painting—The Report of the Commissioners in reference to the Progress made in the various Pictures in 1864—They recommend additional remuneration to Messrs. Maclise and Herbert—Mr. Herbert receives in full—Maclise is not paid what the Commissioners recommended—The Contracts with both Artists cancelled—The Injustice done to Maclise.

DURING the progress of the fresco he continued to look for authentic details regarding costumes and uniforms, and he particularly wished to procure a portrait of the horse which was ridden by the Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo. He received the following letter from the Duke of Northumberland:—

'Northumberland House, May 17, 1860.

'My dear Sir,—We have at "Syon" a picture of "Copenhagen,"[1] the horse which the Duke rode at

[1] As a proof of the extraordinary efforts he made to secure scrupulous accuracy in all the accessories of the picture, one of his

the Battle of Waterloo; it was painted by Ward. As I hear that you wish to see it, may I propose that you pay us a visit at "Syon" on Saturday next, to remain until Monday morning, when we can return to London. Mr. Twopenny, who mentioned your wishes to me, will be also at "Syon."

'Very faithfully yours,

'NORTHUMBERLAND.

'D. Maclise, Esq., R.A.'

After his visit to 'Syon,' he was informed by Sir Charles Eastlake that some interesting particulars concerning the horse 'Copenhagen' were to be learned at 'Strathfieldsaye,' and Sir Charles suggested that he should contrive to see them. He writes in reply: —

'May 23, 1860.

'My dear Sir Charles,—I am greatly obliged to you for all your kindness. When the time comes, I must make the excursion to the inn at Strathfieldsaye; but I hope that the view of the picture (a head by Haydon) may be enough; for the entire animal, by Ward, evidently painted with great interest and

portfolios contains over one hundred sketches of every conceivable part of the British and Prussian uniforms. Cannons and swords, buckles, helmets, and facings are rendered with the most minute particularity. This portfolio was purchased at the sale of the artist's effects, after his death, by the 'Art Union of London,' who had previously, in the year 1865, purchased the copyright of the picture for 500*l*. The 'Art Union' have entered into a contract with Mr. Lambstock, A.R.A., to engrave it on steel for a sum of three thousand guineas. The artist expects to have the engraving completed in the spring of 1872.

painstaking, will be sent to me at any time by the Duke of Northumberland, whom I visited at Syon House last Sunday, where I also met Mr. Twopenny. Some time since, I saw the son of "young gallant Howard" at the Houses of Parliament, and he brought a miniature (of his father) which he stated Lord Carlisle had not seen, and that it was a better likeness than the one referred to by his lordship. Mr. Howard will place this at my disposal. I am dispirited by the slow progress I make, and I confess to be tired out, as I leave each day at six, after an application that only results in the painting a space of six inches. The ground has been miserably laid in every variety of treatment—now rough, now smooth—each surface requiring a particular method to paint it. I imagine a new misery arising from the sun and blazonry, and that I *have* painted looks strangely weak and faded. The place is so dusty that a watering-pot is necessary. This brings me to my last woe—or rather it *is* my last—for the traverse overhead, which has never ceased for a day or an hour, and periodical sweepings, make up the cause of it. Almost the last words spoken to me by Sir Charles Barry were, that he would do what he could to put a stop to this, and he stated that the men might go outside; but he implied a doubt of being able to influence the authority of the Board of Works. Pray excuse all this, and believe me, dear Sir Charles, faithfully yours, 'D. MACLISE.'

The fresco of 'The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher' was nearly finished when the Royal Commissioners made their twelfth report, dated the 25th February, 1861.

They thus refer to the progress of the several wall-paintings, the subject of the agreements with Messrs. Herbert, R.A.; W. Dyce, R.A.; Charles W. Cope, R.A.; E. M. Ward, R.A.; and Daniel Maclise, R.A.:

'1st. In the instance of "The Peers' Robing Room," to be painted by John Rogers Herbert, R.A., we entered into an agreement with him before the room which was to contain the result of his labours was built, and some years before it was ready for him to work in. We adopted this course, knowing that considerable time would be required for the preparation of the designs. Since the completion of the room, in 1858, there has undoubtedly been unnecessary delay in the preparation of cartoons, and in the progress of the wall-painting itself. We believe that such delay on the part of the artist is to be attributed rather to repeated experiments, and to a conscientious study of the subjects committed to him, than to any feeling of indifference or interruption from other occupations.

'2nd. In the instances of "The Peers' and Commons' Corridors," to be painted respectively by Charles West Cope, R.A., and Edward Matthew Ward, R.A., the artists have had peculiar impediments to contend

with. When it was resolved that the subjects intended for those corridors should be executed in fresco, and when it was found that from various causes it was not possible for the artists to paint on the walls, an expedient was adopted by preparing fresco grounds on movable frames, so as to enable them to execute the paintings in some well-lighted apartment, &c., &c.

'The above are cases in which, from various causes of delay, the annual grants have been more than sufficient to meet the claims of the artists. In another instance—that of the apartment called "The Queen's Robing Room" to be painted by W. Dyce, R.A.—a different result has been experienced. The artist was, by the original agreement, allowed a fixed annual sum for a limited period, within which he undertook to complete the work. That period expired in June 1855; the stipulated remuneration having been received by him. An additional year, ending June 1856, was granted to him in consideration of his plea of loss of time while engaged as a Juror and Reporter in the Great Exhibition of 1851. In 1854, on his application to have exclusive occupation of the "Robing Room," we, with your Majesty's gracious permission, granted such privilege accordingly, on the new condition, founded on Mr. Dyce's assurances that the work should be completed in June 1857—a period afterwards still further extended (as stated in our eleventh report) to the beginning of

1858. The work is, to our extreme mortification, still unfinished, &c., &c.

'*In referring to works in progress, and in noticing the greater or less assiduity of the artists, we think it our duty to make especial mention of the unremitting industry of Daniel Maclise, R.A., now employed in painting the subject of "The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher after the Battle of Waterloo," in one of the large compartments of the Royal Gallery.*

'Finding that the process of fresco-painting is imperfectly adapted for subjects containing a multiplicity of details, Mr. Maclise, with the sanction of this Commission, proceeded in the autumn of 1859 to Germany, in order to make researches into the practice of the stereochrome or water-glass method of painting. The result has been that he has adopted that process in the execution of the large wall-painting referred to. The notes which he has compiled on the subject, consisting of information derived from various sources, together with the results of his own subsequent experience, having been submitted to us, we beg leave to subjoin his statement to this Report. The method has also found favour with Mr. Herbert, who, having, after repeated experiments, modified it according to his own views, professes his entire satisfaction with it.

. . . .

'The plan for the decoration of the Royal Gallery with paintings is detailed in our Seventh Report. The

walls contain eighteen compartments, two of which are 45 feet in length.' (This was an error; the spaces measure 46 feet 8 inches, by 12 feet 1 inch.)

. . . . .

'When so extensive a plan of decoration as that of the Royal Gallery is commenced, we conceive that the partial execution should be so conducted as that the work when suspended should, as far as possible, present a symmetrical arrangement. On this principle, we have recommended that the two large compartments in the Royal Gallery should be completed first.

'With respect to works in painting, the uniformity of style and execution which is likely to result from *the employment of one hand and mind* must be regarded as a reason for entrusting a series of designs to one and the same individual.'

In another Report, the Royal Commissioners state (referring to the agreement with Mr. Maclise)—

'The eighteen subjects proposed for the Royal Gallery, and which relate to the military history and glory of the country, are described in the Seventh Report, p. 13. The subject intended for the large compartment on the west side of the Royal Gallery, corresponding in dimensions with that in which Mr. Maclise was then employed, is, "Trafalgar—the Death of Nelson."

'The stipulated price for the picture now in progress, measuring 46 feet by 12 (as stated in the

estimated class for the year ending March 31, 1860) is 3,500*l.* That sum has been voted. The artist has received no part of it.'

The foregoing extracts from the Reports of the Royal Commissioners afford sufficient evidence that previous to the appearance of the Report in 1861, Maclise had all but perfected a gigantic work (it was then nearly finished), in a surprisingly short time. That whilst the other artists employed on the wall-paintings of the palace had failed to execute their contracts within the stipulated periods, although they had received, some, the entire, others, a large proportion, of the moneys payable to them on the completion of their works, Maclise had neither received nor required any part of the price of his picture, and was complimented by the Commissioners on 'his unremitting industry.' He worked at it incessantly, all through the summer, autumn, and winter of 1861; in that cold, cheerless, and (as he expressively called it) 'gloomy Gallery,' utterly abstracting himself from all other work, to his own pecuniary loss and the disappointment of those who had given him commissions.

In the winter of this year, he reverted to his original intention to dispose of the small property at Ardee; and, after some communications with his agent, I received from him the following letter: —

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea,
'November 29, 1861.

'My dear O'Driscoll,—As I write your name, the old habit of thirty years runs the pen in a kind of familiar and facile groove. How much I am obliged to you for the kind interest that dictated your note. I mentioned your name to Mr. E., merely to show him that I had an old friend who could understand *me*, and discuss with *him* this little affair, if *I* could not. However, you are both in accord, and unless I can get him to believe that I am not thinking at all of profits, or interest, or whether a 3 per cent. on the amount of the sale will yield more or less, I find I will not be allowed to show my magnanimity and sell—and lose as it may be. I have, nevertheless, as you suggested, written to him, stating my price; and as I was once offered by him 1,000*l.*, and legal expenses of transfer, I have now said that I should be glad to be relieved from this kind of property (which I hate) for 1,000*l.*; the purchaser to incur, and pay for, any legal expenses. I also told him that I would commission you to buy with the proceeds a little cottage at Bray, or at Kingstown, or anywhere you might select, to which I could repair for three autumn months yearly, and inhale such air as might enable me to endure the fogs of the Thames for the other nine. I was very much depressed when you turned me up in that gloomy Hall in Westminster, where, by-the-bye, I may say I have lived

ever since. I hope when you come next year, that we may contrive to be very often together while you remain.

'Believe me, as ever, most faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

The sale he refers to was carried out. He was reluctant, however, to select a residence for him in Ireland, in the way he proposed. I suggested that he should come over to this country during the next summer, and said I would assist him in his object to the best of my ability. He thus writes me in reply:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.,
'December 7, 1861.

'My dear O'Driscoll,—This is Saturday, and I always go to Brighton, in one hour, where I have apartments, and remain there until Monday. As I wish to know your boy, pray tell him that I will always be glad to see him on Sundays, and *here*. I shall not allude to any other matter just now, more than to thank you for your advice to come over and seek for myself at Bray or elsewhere. As I so often told you "that fatal sea"—how easy my prospect would be but for *it*. I am always ill after two hours of the Channel, even when it is in its calmest, oiliest, and therefore most hypocritical state. I think that we islanders ought to be exempt from that sea-tax. Now, when I see a Frenchman prostrate on deck,

and the very waxed tips of his moustaches limp, by reason of the *maladie de mer*, and salt-water, I hold that 'tis but right; and I hope such a preventive check will be given to his countrymen should they ever dream of being invaders. Then, indeed, does Albion look "Perfidious, &c., &c." No more at present. Yours most faithfully,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

The fresco of 'The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher, at La Belle Allianće, after the Battle of Waterloo,' was wholly finished in December 1861; although, for some reasons unexplained, it remained covered and invisible until March 1862.

The meeting is represented as taking place directly in front of the house, La Belle Alliance, which is shown in the centre of the picture. Wellington and Blucher are in the act of shaking hands. The Duke is mounted on his favourite charger, 'Copenhagen;' there is an expression of savage and vengeful triumph in the face of the Prussian general. The features of the great Duke indicate calm and stern resolution, with mingled emotions of sadness and sorrow, as he regards the masses of his devoted and gallant soldiers, lying around him dead and dying.

The characters of the two commanders are admirably depicted in the expression of their features. Behind Wellington is a party of the 'Life Guards,' and near him are seen Lord Somerset, Lord Sandys,

Sir Hussey Vivian, and a number of other officers. Bulow (the Prussian general) and a numerous staff, are on the left, with Blucher. At the extreme rear of these, groups of the British cavalry are seen pursuing the retreating French. Artillery and ammunition-waggons are seen scattered on the brow of the hill and down its side. Shattered gun-carriages, dismounted guns, and dead and wounded men, occupy a part of the foreground. Prominent in this part of the picture is the body of a handsome young officer, borne 'from the field of his fame, fresh and gory,' by a Highlander, one of the Foot Guards, and a Fusilier; the faces of the rough soldiers are expressive of deep sorrow for the premature fate of the brave officer, of whom Lord Byron said:—

> And when showered
> The deathbolts deadliest the thin files along,
> Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd,
> They reached no nobler breast than thine, young gallant Howard.

Still further in front, lies a dead trumpeter of the Life Guards, and a wounded general officer. A particularly impressive group is seen near the shattered gun-carriages. A soldier in the Hanoverian uniform, who is mortally wounded, is supported by two Belgian priests, one of whom holds the crucifix before the glazing eyes of the dying man; a sœur de charité, and a vivandière, with her barrel, from which she has taken a glass of spirits, which she holds to the pale lips of the expiring soldier.

This picture is pre-eminently the largest and most finished composition ever achieved by an English artist; and no continental painter has approached it in magnitude or grandeur of conception. The work is one of which any nation may be proud. It is an imperishable record of the great battle which consummated the destiny of Napoleon I. The picture tells, with silent eloquence, its own tale of triumph.

When it is stated that this gigantic work was begun at the time, and under the disheartening circumstances referred to, it appears incredible that it should have been completely finished in 1861. It is the first wall-painting of such enormous dimensions that has been produced in England, or anywhere else, according to the 'water-glass' or stereochromic method. Congratulatory communications reached the artist from France and other parts of the Continent, as well as from America, on the appearance of this marvellous performance.

At this moment, however, a statement appeared in some of the public journals well calculated to give him pain, and which, if true, would have rendered the picture utterly worthless in a National point of view. It was confidently asserted that the 'Meeting of Blucher and Wellington,' at Waterloo, had never taken place at all; that the idea originated in the fecundity of the artist's imagination, and that it was, as matter of history, wholly unfounded. This was necessarily a serious cause of disquiet to Maclise,

and evoked an active controversy on the subject, in which, however, the artist took no part. The Commissioners were rather startled at the statement; their object, in reference to the decoration of the Royal Gallery, being, to use their own language, 'that the subjects should exclusively relate to, and be illustrative of, actual events in the military and naval history and glory of the country.' At the earnest solicitation of Sir Charles Eastlake, Her Majesty the Queen wrote to the Crown Princess, at Berlin, to ascertain how the fact was; and the result was a letter from General Nostitz, stating that having been 'personal aide-de-camp to Prince Blucher throughout the campaigns of 1813, 1814, and 1815, and by his side at every important movement, he was able to assert, positively, that this meeting really took place—that the two generals congratulated each other there, on the brilliant victory achieved by them, and concerted measures for the pursuit of the enemy during the night.'

This letter—so completely vindicating the accuracy of the artist—was very grateful to his feelings, and very much disconcerted those prurient cavillers who 'search with such avidity to discover flaws in the titles of Fame.'

On December 14, 1861, His Royal Highness the Prince Consort died. The event had a most discouraging influence on the objects of the Fine Art Commission; it appeared to have paralysed their

proceedings. The progress of the wall-paintings was delayed and obstructed, and it was the death of the Prince that led eventually to the cancelling of the contracts then existing with Messrs. Herbert and Maclise for the completion of their works.

His Royal Highness (himself an accomplished amateur in art) and Sir Charles Eastlake may be said to have been the only members of the Commission that possessed a scintilla of learning on the subject of mural paintings, or the development and application of the stereochromic method of preserving them. His Royal Highness, after the return of the artist from Germany, was very frequently to be found in the Royal Gallery, observing with friendly solicitude the effect of water-glass on the great work as it proceeded.

Maclise was very much depressed by the death of the Prince. I saw him shortly afterwards; and it was not difficult to perceive how sensibly he was affected by the event; he gave fervid expression to his deep regret and his respect for the memory of his Royal Highness; he remarked that whenever difficulties presented themselves, which only an adept could understand, the assistance and co-operation of the Prince were ever graciously and efficiently accorded in removing them. The suggestions of the artist were never coldly or reluctantly received; but, on the contrary, in all his personal intercourse with Maclise, there was an open and cheerful affability of

manner on the part of the Prince, peculiarly fascinating. It is somewhere said that there is a kind of freemasonry in art which not infrequently renders even Royalty itself indifferent to, or forgetful of, the barriers that interpose between it and the outer world; the beautiful and affecting episode in the Life of Francis I., in whose arms the great Leonardo da Vinci expired, may be referred to as a proof of this.

Father Prout (the late Rev. Francis Mahony) was an old and intimate friend of Maclise; he wrote to him, when he was leaving London never to return, thus:—

'Globe Office, Tuesday night.

'My dear Mac,—As I am going to the Continent, and won't have an opportunity of seeing your grand work at the Royal Academy, will you let me have a peep any day this week? Not to trouble you with writing, I'll take silence for consent.

'Yours ever,

'FRANK MAHONY.'

The Commissioners had before them, from the beginning of 1862, the study and oil painting of 'The Death of Nelson,' which they required Maclise to execute and submit to them. Yet they made no movement in the matter until the month of February 1863, when he received the following letter from Sir Charles L. Eastlake:—

'Palace of Westminster, February 24, 1863.

'Sir,—I have to acquaint you, that at a meeting of the Fine Arts Commission yesterday, your study for the subject of "The Death of Nelson" to be painted in the Royal Gallery in the Palace of Westminster was approved. You are now at liberty to begin the wall-painting when it may suit your convenience.

'The Commissioners assume that in completing it you will study the likeness of Captain Hardy as well as that of Lord Nelson.

'I am, &c., &c.,

'C. L. EASTLAKE.

'D. Maclise, R.A.'

Sir Charles Eastlake at the same time wrote the following letter:—

'7 Fitzroy Square, February 24, 1863.

'My dear Maclise,—In the enclosed I have followed the words of the minute. The head of Nelson was much admired. The Commissioners could not judge of the likeness of Hardy, and therefore meant to say that they relied on your following some good portrait. I shall now, on the authority of your letter, dated 22nd last month, make application for half the price of your next painting. The Commissioners who attended were, I need hardly say, greatly interested and pleased with your picture. They found no fault. Sincerely yours,

'C. L. EASTLAKE.'

On June 13, 1864, a Royal Commission was appointed, 'to consider the agreements made by the Fine Arts Commission with artists in respect to wall-paintings for the Palace of Westminster.' Up to this period Maclise had received no intimation whatever that the agreement made with him for the additional sixteen compartments in the Royal Gallery was to be rescinded. On the contrary it was well known to the Commissioners that he had actually prepared highly-finished designs of the subjects selected for three of the compartments: i.e. 'Elizabeth at Tilbury,' 'Marlborough at Blenheim,' and 'Blake at Tunis,' and made the preparatory sketches for the remainder: 'Alfred in the Danish Camp,' 'Boadicea inciting her Army,' 'Brian Boroimhe defeating the Danes at the Bridge of Clontarf,' 'Edith finding the Dead Body of Harold,' 'Richard Cœur de Lion coming in sight of the Holy City,' 'Eleanor saving the Life of her Husband by sucking the Poison from a Wound in his Arm,' 'Bruce during a Retreat before the English protecting a Woman borne on a Litter and checking the Pursuers,' 'Philippa interceding for the Lives of the Citizens of Calais,' 'Edward the Black Prince entering London by the side of King John of France,' 'The Marriage of Henry V. at Troyes with the Princess Katharine of France,' 'The Death of Wolfe,' 'The Death of Abercrombie,' 'and Lord Cornwallis receiving the Sons of Tippoo as Hostages.'

Previous to the appointment of this Commission a letter of some significance, having regard to subsequent occurrences, was addressed by J. R. Herbert, R.A., to Mr. Cowper (the First Commissioner of Works); it bears date January 16, 1864:—

J. R. Herbert, Esq., to the Right Hon. W. Cowper, M.P.

'Athenæum, January 16, 1864.

'Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter informing me that the estimates for Works of Art in the Houses of Parliament are now being prepared, and requesting to know whether I shall proceed with another wall-painting in order to be entitled to an instalment during the year ending 1865.

'In reply I beg to state the original estimate for the entire series of works in *fresco* for the Peers' Robing Room to be executed by me was 9,000*l.*

'For the designs of four of this series which I have made, I have received instalments, viz., "Judgment of Daniel," "Judgment of Solomon," "Daniel in the Lion's Den," and "Moses descending with the Law to the Israelites." This estimate was based upon the work being done in *fresco, the most rapid of all modes of painting* as it does not admit of the least change or re-touching, so as to be durable after the colour has been on the wall from six to eight hours.

'The single work that I have yet been able to bring to completion was commenced by me in fresco,

the details on which my original estimate of time was based are now before me; in them I give myself one year for the cartoon of "Moses," and eight months more only, as ample time for the actual painting of the work on the wall. I was two-and-a-half years on the cartoon, and I worked upon the fresco for a year more, and in the course of that time became convinced that the utmost within the compass of fresco would fall far short of my desires, and that the dignity of sacred art required a refinement of execution which that mode does not and never did allow of. This conviction was also entertained by His Royal Highness the late Prince Consort, who, remarking on the decay of most of the frescoes in the building, strongly recommended me to make experiments for another process, and for this purpose he caused to be forwarded to me in April, 1859, a jar of silicate of potash. I at once made several experiments with it, but I continued to work in the manner I had engaged to paint, i.e., fresco.

'When His Royal Highness in 1860 saw some of these experiments (of which several are still on the south wall) he felt the great inferiority of fresco, and requested that I would adopt one of these processes exampled on the wall for the "Moses," instead of *the fresco manner*. These experiments are alluded to in a Parliamentary Report, 1861, No. 12, p. 10.

'In order to carry out the wishes of His Royal

Highness I first made my experiments for applying silicate to the work then existing in order to save it. I found it impossible, and I cut away what remained on the wall (on the whole I have cut off over a year of fresco work).

'Since the close of 1860 until its completion at the present time, the execution of the "Moses" being in a process admitting of the utmost refinements of treatment and subtleties of art, has occupied me three years more; single parts, which in fresco must have been completed somehow in about six hours, have taken me in the new process as many weeks to perfect them. Considering the enormous amount of work which this present process has entailed upon me, it will, I think, be felt, if carefully examined, that I have been even expeditious with it.

'I have devoted in all to the "Moses" (including over two years to the cartoon begun in 1855) nearly seven years, and I have given all this time because I believed the dignity of the place demanded the highest possible completion, and also that I ventured to hope I might there make my art conducive to the public good.

'I do not wish it to be understood that I have been since 1855 (now nearly ten years) uninterruptedly engaged upon this work; but some of the time not reckoned in the above calculation has been used in easel work really forming studies in colour for figures

in the different cartoons. Altogether, at the fairest computation, it has occupied me six years and a half.

'The foregoing details will, I think, satisfy you that my remuneration for the "Moses" *must be reconsidered, and in the event of its being determined to adopt the process alluded to above, and which I have no doubt whatever is almost indestructible, for the other subjects, I need not say that a new estimate must also be made for them.*

'I beg leave to affirm that, taking into account the time wasted on the cut-out fresco work, the time required for the fulfilment of the request to make the experiments for adoption of the above process, 2000*l.* (the original estimate for the "Moses") would pay me about 300*l.* a-year only, and this with the *perpetual temptation* held out to me of commissions for easel pictures, which would have paid me as much in any three or four weeks.

'The following will give some idea of the process used:—

'In order to shut off all chance of the lime in the (hollow) wall from burning the colours in future years, the wall is first well brushed with a stiff brush, removing every grain of sand not solidly bound in the plaster, and also in order that when it is saturated with distilled water, carbonate of lime may exude sufficiently to bind the brilliant oxide of zinc white with which it is then covered.

'As the work proceeds each part is wetted any

number of times, admitting thereby changes or additions (and even the use of genuine ultramarine and colour carrying a charm no other can supply, and which is destroyed in a moment in fresco) until the completion which it calls forth is attained. The whole is afterwards charged with a silicate, vitrifying the wall and colours, while stopping short of a glazed surface; some colours require fixing with the brush with stronger silicate.

'If, however, it be resolved that the remaining works shall be executed in fresco, "The Judgment of Solomon," containing about the same space and work as the "Moses," could be completed on this side of 1865. But it would be difficult, if not impossible, for *me* to return to a method which our climate, gas, and other causes have rendered as fragile *as elsewhere*, and which, moreover, the least cursory comparison with the "Moses" would show to be wholly inferior in its results to those which may and ought to be aimed at.

'I have, &c.

(Signed) 'J. R. HERBERT.

'To the Rt. Hon. W. Cowper, M.P.'

A Bonham-Carter, Esq. to D. Maclise, Esq., R.A.

'June 24, 1864.

'Sir,—I am directed to inform you that a Commission under the royal sign manual has been appointed "to consider the agreements made by the

Commissioners of the Fine Arts with artists in respect to wall-paintings for the Palace of Westminster, which are now in progress, or which have been recently completed, and to report whether any cases have arisen of a nature to make it desirable that those agreements should be revised, and if so what alterations should be recommended." And in stating that application has been made by them to the First Commissioner of Works for the original agreement made with you, I am to request you to favour the Commissioners with any observations you may have to make on the subject.

'The members of the Commission are Lord Taunton, Lord Overstone, Sir C. Eastlake, Mr. Layard, and Mr. Holford. Their next meeting is on Monday next.

'I am, &c.

(Signed) 'A. BONHAM-CARTER,

'Hon. Sec.

'D. Maclise, Esq., R.A.'

Similar letters were sent to J. R. Herbert, Esq. R.A., C. W. Cope, Esq., R.A., E. M. Ward, Esq., R.A.; and to Mrs. Dyce as the representative of Mr. Dyce, R.A., deceased.

Any human being reading this letter would, assuredly, interpret it, *not* as a prelude to the total rescission of existing contracts with the artists, but rather as an invitation, to suggest any exceptional

circumstances of difficulty in the execution of the works that might warrant the Commissioners in recommending an increase in the scale of remuneration as they had done on a previous occasion.

J. R. Herbert, Esq., R.A., to A. Bonham-Carter, Esq.

Monday, June 27, 1864.

'Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th inst., informing me that application had been made to the First Commissioner of Works for the agreement made with me, and requesting me to forward any observations I may have to make on the subject.

'In reply I would respectfully call the attention of the Commission to my letters to the First Commissioner dated January 16; and, if they have any bearing on the subject which the Commissioners are to report upon, those also to the First Commissioner of January 20, and the 23rd of March last.

'These letters, which, no doubt, the First Commissioner will lay before you, will show that the agreement originally made with me was for works of a totally different character, and to be executed in a different manner from my work of "Moses" lately completed. And that the variation in method was adopted with the full approbation of the Royal Fine Art Commission now expired.

'May I take the liberty to add that all questions of pecuniary remuneration are so painful to artists, that

I cannot help feeling it would be more conducive to the objects of the Commission, as well as much more satisfactory to myself, if I named some one to represent me in those points.

'I have, &c.,

(Signed) 'J. R. HERBERT.

'A. B. Carter, Esq., &c.'.

Daniel Maclise, Esq., R.A., to Alfred Bonham Carter, Esq.

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.,
'June 27, 1864.

'Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 24th inst., I need only trouble you with one or two observations. In 1857 I began a design for one of the larger compartments in the Royal Gallery, "The Meeting between Wellington and Blucher after the Battle of Waterloo," to be painted in fresco, but I found the process so ill suited to the due rendering of a multiplicity of details over a surface of 46 feet, that I unwillingly resigned the commission intrusted to me by the Royal Commissioners of the Fine Arts.

'His late Royal Highness the Prince Consort then directed my attention to the water-glass method of painting; specimens of which I had seen in the Great Exhibition of 1851, and in which I had made some small experiments. In 1859, under His Royal Highness's auspices, I proceeded to Berlin and elsewhere, where the method had been successfully practised,

and where I painted myself, and found the process so satisfactory that I adopted it for the execution of the above-named subject, and I am now engaged in the corresponding panel in the Royal Gallery in painting "The Death of Nelson" in the same method.

'I consider the process to have many advantages over that of fresco, but it is certainly a slow one, and invites attention to details and to greater finish; above all it is to be hoped its enduring qualities will compensate for many drawbacks.

'I have, &c.,

(Signed) 'DANIEL MACLISE.

'To Alfred Bonham-Carter, Esq.'

'P.S.—As I have alluded to the slowness of the process, I may perhaps be permitted to remark that it necessitates constant labour to paint a picture double the dimensions of the largest painted in the New Palace, such as those I have been engaged on, and I have found it imperative in accepting this commission to give up all others with which I had been intrusted, and at great pecuniary sacrifice; a subject to which I had not intended to allude if I had not been afforded the opportunity of making these observations.'

The Commissioners met on July 2, 1864, to consider the matters referred to in their letter of June 24, when the following minutes and resolutions were adopted:—

'Agreement with Mr. Dyce, R. A., read.

'Agreement with Mr. Maclise, considered.

'Letter of Mr. Maclise, read.

'The Commissioners visited Mr. Maclise, in his studio in the "Royal Gallery," when he stated that at the commencement of his work he had been occupied for a month in painting in *buon fresco* the "Meeting of Wellington and Blucher after the Battle of Waterloo;" that this much of his work he had destroyed, the method being, in his opinion, ill-adapted to the subject, and that, of his own free will and choice, he had substituted the "water-glass" method in his subsequent operations. The agreement with Mr. Herbert, R.A., was considered.

'The letter of Mr. Herbert (June 27 last), and the letter of January 16 last therein referred to, from Mr. Herbert to the First Commissioner of Works, were read.'

The Report was then agreed to, from which I extract the following paragraphs:—

'After duly considering the terms in which the limits of our enquiry are defined, we have deemed it incumbent on us to direct our attention exclusively to the engagements entered into on the part of the Fine Arts Commission with Messrs. Herbert, Maclise, Cope, Ward, and the eminent artist Mr. Dyce, recently deceased.

'We have put ourselves in direct communication

with these gentlemen, or their representatives, and we have personally inspected their works, with the view of informing ourselves accurately as to the state of those works—how many of them are completed, and the progress which has been made in those which are still incomplete.

1. 'From letters which passed between Sir Charles Eastlake, as Secretary to the Fine Arts Commission, and Mr. Herbert, which will be found in the appendix to this report, it appears that Mr. Herbert engaged to execute nine wall paintings in the Peers' Robing Room; that these pictures were to be completed in not less than *ten years from April* 1, 1849; that the total sum to be paid to Mr. Herbert for these works was 9,000*l.*

'We now find, at the end of fifteen years, *one* of these paintings is finished, with the exception of the water-glass fixing. Designs for *three* of the remaining eight pictures have been submitted to the Fine Arts Commission, and have received their approval, at the respective dates of July 1851, 1855, 1857. No wall painting, however, has been commenced in respect of any of these eight pictures. *Mr. Herbert has received on account of these three Designs* the sum of 1,800*l.*; while for one wall picture completed, there has been paid to him the sum of 2,000*l.* It thus appears that the time within which it was understood that the nine paintings were to be completed, has proved insufficient for the completion of

one of the nine; while 3,000*l.* (*sic in orig.*) out of the 9,000*l.* have been already paid to the artist.

'In the painting of "Moses bringing down the Tables of the Law," Mr. Herbert has produced a work which has excited much attention, and has secured a large share of public approval. We have further reason to believe that the accomplishment of this result has required more prolonged and patient thought, and more personal labour, than was anticipated by either of the parties to the original contract —the Fine Arts Commission or Mr. Herbert himself.

'We therefore feel justified in recommending that a further sum of 3,000*l.*, in addition to the sum of 2,000*l.* already paid to him, be awarded to Mr. Herbert on account of the one picture which he has completed viz. "Moses."

'But we think it necessary to accompany this recommendation with the expression of our opinion that the contract, as regards the remaining eight pictures, should be cancelled. No commencement has been made of any one of these pictures. The time, nevertheless, within which they were *all* to have been finished has long since expired.'

2. 'By the letters between Sir Charles Eastlake and Mr. Maclise, which appear in the appendix, and *which constitute the agreement* between him and the Fine Arts Commissioners, *Mr. Maclise has been entrusted with the decoration of the Royal Gallery.*

'This was to be effected by the execution of

eighteen wall paintings of various sizes. For the two largest the artist was to receive 3,500*l.* each, and for the remaining sixteen the estimated cost was 1,000*l.* each. One of the larger compartments is completed ("The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher at Waterloo"), and the artist has received for this the full stipulated price of 3,500*l.* The painting of the second large compartment is in an advanced state. The artist has received for this one half of the stipulated price (1,750*l.*). The balance due to him, on the completion of the work, is therefore 1,750*l.*

'We believe that these two large and important works will be completed in about EIGHT YEARS from the commencement of them. We are satisfied that Mr. Maclise has applied himself with uninterrupted diligence and energy to the accomplishment of the work he has undertaken. That he has devoted his well-known skill and genius as an artist, exclusively to this work, foregoing the emolument which he might have undoubtedly derived from the execution of private commissions. The probable result will be the completion of two works of unusual magnitude, within a reasonable time. Under these circumstances we are of opinion that some consideration beyond the sum stipulated for in the contract, is *fairly due to Mr. Maclise*; we therefore recommend that the total sum to be paid for the two wall paintings which, according to the existing agreement, is 7,000*l.*, should

be increased to 10,000*l.*, making 5,000*l.* for each picture.[1]

'If this recommendation be approved, the sum of 1,500*l.* will be payable at once on account of the painting which is finished, and the sum of 3,250*l.* (1,750*l.* plus 1500*l.*) will be payable on completion of that in progress.'

'We think the understanding with regard to the paintings in the other compartments not yet commenced, ought to be treated as we have already recommended in the case of Mr. Herbert; that is to say, the engagement, so far as regards them, ought to be cancelled.

'But we desire to express our strong conviction that it is for the true interest and honour of artists, as well as due to public economy, *that in future there should be no subsequent departure from the provisions of any contract which has been deliberately agreed upon.*'

The Commissioners acted in accordance with their report—they deliberately cancelled their agreement with Mr. Maclise. It is not too much to say that this was a proceeding destitute of any imaginable justification in either honour or equity. Because—

First,—The right to rescind an agreement may exist

[1] This recommendation was never carried out; the increased remuneration was fully paid to Mr. Herbert. Maclise never received more than 3,500*l.* for his work: 'The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher at Waterloo.'

in the party who has been guilty of no default; but no one can take advantage of his own wrong in order to evade a contract into which he has entered. The agreement with Maclise was never violated or varied by him. The Commissioners, themselves, do not even suggest any such thing; on the contrary, a reference to their Reports (*supra*) will afford irrefragable evidence that in the execution of his contracts he exhibited 'unremitting industry' and 'uninterrupted diligence and energy.'

Secondly,—Because the isolated reason stated by the Commissioners for this act of injustice to Maclise, is the alleged breach of contract by *other artists*, with whose engagements he was wholly unconnected, but with whom, as regards the rescission of the contract, he is placed, so to speak, in *pari delicto*. Time was not made the essence of the contract with Maclise, because for the execution of such gigantic works it was not possible to define, even proximately, what a reasonable period might be. The works of the other artists being of a far less extensive character there was no difficulty in fixing a definitive period within which they were to be executed.

Thirdly,—Because the Commissioners themselves, very recently before the publication of their Report, affirmed the fact that the contract was in existence, and that it would be carried out under any circumstances. This is evidenced by a letter of Sir C. Eastlake to Maclise, dated February 18, 1863, in

which, after stating that the Commission 'was about to be either dissolved or conducted in some reduced and altered form,' he adds, '*But, in whatever new form the business may be conducted, the works already ordered are to be completed.*'

Then, however, came Mr. Herbert's letter, of January 16, 1864, intimating, in no uncertain terms, his determination *not* to proceed with his contract if the question of increased remuneration was not considered. Clearly it was this letter that superinduced the action of the Commissioners in cancelling the contracts; and that fact, of itself, proves the gross injustice of the proceeding as regards Maclise.

How, then, was he treated on the question of payment, in reference to the works he had actually executed? The original agreement was to pay him 3,500*l.* for each of his two large works, measuring 46 feet by 12 feet. The agreement with Mr. Herbert was to pay him 1,000*l.* each, for nine pictures; the largest of them measuring 22 feet by 10 feet 6 inches. Maclise fully finished his two pictures and was to have received 10,000*l.* for both (i.e. an increase of 1,500*l.* on each). Mr. Herbert finished but one picture out of nine, and for that one he actually *received* 5,000*l.* (i.e. an increase of 4,000*l.*). The Commissioners *have never paid Maclise the increased sum for the 'Wellington and Blucher' work*, and in this they have perpetrated another flagitious wrong. I am very far from suggesting that the sum paid for

the 'Moses' was too much; it is a great work, and worthy of a great artist; and, possibly, the amount paid for it did not remunerate Mr. Herbert for the loss of other engagements whilst devoting himself to this noble performance—I contrast the prices agreed to be paid to each artist merely to demonstrate the flagrant injustice with which the rule of remuneration was applied to one of them.

In addition to the sum of 5,000*l.* paid to Mr. Herbert, R.A., for *one* of the nine pictures he had agreed to paint, he received 1,800*l.* on account of the *designs* of three of the remaining eight. Maclise, at the request of the Commissioners, executed three highly finished designs for pictures (part of the remaining sixteen he had agreed to paint), but the Commissioners did not think proper to pay him one farthing on account of these designs. The facts in connection with Mr. Maclise and Mr. Herbert are not introduced here for the purpose of questioning the strict propriety of Mr. Herbert's views and proceedings as regarded his contract with the Royal Commissioners, and his estimate of the value of his work, 'The Moses,'—nor are these observations intended to suggest inferences prejudicial to that distinguished painter; but, if I had refrained from placing in contra-position the exact circumstances connected with the engagements of the artists and the action of the Commissioners in reference to each, I should have failed to demonstrate how conspicu-

ously unjust was their treatment of Maclise. He had extremely clear grounds for appealing to public opinion against a proceeding so unprecedented—so utterly unworthy of a great nation; but his proud spirit shrank from the utterance of any complaint or remonstrance; the iron had entered his soul, but he endured it with Spartan-like silence and fortitude. The magnificent cartoon which he had executed before his visit to Berlin (according to the requirements of fresco painting) lay forgotten and neglected. The 'Athenæum' proposed that this original and masterly work should be purchased by the nation—but the suggestion was unheeded. All these circumstances occurring about the same period, were well calculated to disturb and distract him in the progress of the great work he was then engaged on ('The Death of Nelson'), but he wrought on with unfaltering industry to its completion, which was achieved at the end of 1864.

CHAPTER XII.

The Fresco of the 'Death of Nelson' completed—Description of the picture—Extracts from Sketch-book of the artist—Memoir of Lieut. Pollard of the 'Victory'—Drummond, Valet to Lord Nelson, etc.—Letter to Mr. John Forster—Illness and death of Maclise's sister—His sorrow for her loss—Letters to Mr. Stephens of the Athenæum—Death of Sir C. Eastlake—Sir E. Landseer declines the presidency of the R. A.—It is offered to Maclise, who also declines it—1866, two pictures exhibited by him: Oil study, 'Here Nelson fell,' and a portrait—1867, Othel'o, Desdemona, Emilia, and 'A Winter's Night Tale'—Letters of Maclise to his niece in reference to a picture she was painting—Letters to same with a sketch—Miss Banks exhibits a picture at R. A.—Letter of Maclise referring to Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty—Letter of Mr. Forster to a M. P. pointing out the injustice done to Maclise.

It will thus be seen that from the time when the Wellington and Blucher fresco was completed, until the picture in the corresponding compartment—'The Death of Nelson'—was finished, three years only had elapsed; eighteen months of which were occupied in the preparation of the cartoon, and the preliminary wall study. This work was fully executed by the commencement of the year 1865.

The picture presents that portion of the quarter-deck of the 'Victory' where Nelson received his death wound. The bullet which struck him down came from the mizen-top of the 'Redoubtable,'

whose studding-sail and boom were shot away, and fell on the decks of the 'Victory.' The mizen-top of the latter was also shot away, and fell on the enemy's deck. The figure of the fallen hero is in the centre of the picture; he is supported by mournful attendants, and propped up in the arms of Hardy, his favourite and faithful captain. There is a mingled expression of ineffable suffering and unshaken fortitude delineated in his features. Near Nelson are seen Doctor Beattie—who is in a stooping position, examining the bullet-wound—Lieutenant Ram, Captain Adair, Serjeant Secker, and two seamen, who are attracted to the spot by seeing Nelson fall. A brawny tar, bringing a tricolour flag to the Admiral, forgets, for a moment, that he holds the glorious trophy, and falls on his knees in an agony of grief. The fall of Nelson appears to have been seen by only a few marines and sailors who were near him just at the moment. The perfection of British discipline is manifested by the seamen, who, in the extremity of their grief and consternation at the catastrophe and the confusion around, stand steadily working their guns; the expression of their faces alone indicating their feelings. A coloured seaman is pointing the attention of a marine to the mizen-top of the 'Redoubtable' (from amongst the sharpshooters stationed there came the bullet that struck down Nelson), who directly aims at the mizen-top. A sailor is also seen on the poop-deck, attracting the attention of two

young midshipmen to the same spot, one of whom[1] fires into the mizen-top of the 'Redoubtable' and brings down the sharpshooter who had just given Nelson his death-wound. A large mass of figures, life-size, are distributed along the sides of the 'Victory,' engaged in the dreadful work of death, whilst grouped around the guns lie the dead and dying, shot down at their posts. Many of the able seamen who are working the guns are bared to the waist, and in every imaginable position calculated to exhibit the peculiar skill of Maclise in delineating the human figure. The accessories of this portion of the picture, and, indeed, of every part of it, are painted with extraordinary power and minuteness of finish. Turning to another part of the ship, a group of sailors (one of them a grey-headed tar) are engaged in removing a shipmate, who appears to be expiring of his wounds, to the cockpit. Near to this group is seen a bleeding seaman with two women attending on him; one holds a bowl of water, whilst the other sponges blood from his brow. The ship's cook (a coloured sailor) at the same moment presents to the wounded man a glass of brandy which he has taken from the keg slung at his side. Two men are seen

[1] The young midshipman who performed this deed is Lieutenant Pollard, now a venerable pensioner at Greenwich Hospital. Maclise visited him there, and ascertained from him some of the above details.

bringing buckets of water up the companion-ladder, to extinguish the fire in the 'Redoubtable,' caused by the grenades flung from the deck of the 'Victory,' and to prevent the fire reaching the latter, which is close alongside the enemy's ship. Above, on the poop, lies the captured ensign of a Spanish ship, and at the foot of the companion-ladder two sailors are assisting young Lieutenant Westphal, who is badly wounded, and is swooning in their arms. The fearless young 'powder-monkey' is seen carrying a box of powder to the gunners. Near the poop are various groups, some with their wounds bandaged, some lying where they fell; and others, having fallen, are seen still retaining their hold on the rope or weapon which was in their grasp when they were shot down. The decks exhibit all the accompaniments of such a dreadful action—broken gun-carriages, ram- and sponging-rods, marline-spikes, cutlasses, the large copper grog-can from which the men were served at the guns; tubs of water for extinguishing the fuse, used when the flint-lock of a cannon missed fire, and double-headed shot. The breasts and arms of some of the fallen sailors exhibit the tattooing produced by puncturing the part and rubbing a strong solution of gunpowder into the orifices. The breast of one poor fellow, lying dead, has delineated on it two hearts transfixed by a dart and the name of 'Sue' underneath. In another part of the deck is seen a tobacco-box, the name of 'Polly' on the lid; re-

calling the lines in the nautical song of 'Wapping Old Stairs'—

> When I vowed that I still would continue the same,
> And gave you the bacco-box marked with my name.[1]

The profusion and scrupulous accuracy of these minutiæ are very wonderful—blocks and cables, pulleys and rigging, guns and gun-carriages, are all pictured with a precision perfectly astonishing. Having regard to the short period within which the work was completed, every hour of the artist's time must have been devoted to it. His sketchbook exhibits an example of the wonderful industry and accuracy with which he worked out all the details of the picture. Every portion of the ship, the calibre of the guns used in the action, their situation in the ship, and sketches of the gun-carriages, &c., were all separately made. He went to the Hospital at Greenwich and saw Lieutenant Pollard of the 'Victory,' Drummond, the valet of Nelson, &c., &c. I transcribe from his sketchbook a few of the memoranda:—

'Lieut. Pollard was a midshipman at Trafalgar. He was then seventeen years old. He it was who shot down the Frenchman in the top of the "Redoubtable"—he told me this.—June 9, 1862.

'I saw Drummond, the valet of Nelson, and Captain Parker, who was also at Trafalgar. I saw

[1] Vide the description given by Mr. Gullick in his admirable Handbook.

Admiral Seymour, who was a midshipman on board the "Victory."—June 10, 1862.

'"Téméraire" was on one side. The "Victory" was attempted to be boarded by the captain of the "Redoubtable." Mainyards lowered to make a bridge to the "Victory."

'32-pounder carronade on the quarter-deck; 64-pounders on the lower deck of the "Victory."

'Rivers, midshipman (a young boy), his leg shot off on the poop.'

The following letter to Mr. Stephens[1] was written for the purpose of attracting attention to the case of Lieutenant Pollard, a brave and deserving officer, who was suffered to remain in a state of obscurity and neglect quite discreditable to the country:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, May 13, 1863.

'Dear Sir,—You may fairly lay claim to having originated the controversy—but there is now none—respecting Lieut. Pollard of the "Victory." I presume you have seen a series of letters in the "Times." I mentioned the gentleman's claims to some persons of influence; but I believe your word or two in the "Athenæum" has called attention to them, and may end in some recognition of his act (historical act), which would be a kind of compensation for fifty-eight years of neglect. Who could believe that a Governor of Greenwich Hospital—I

[1] Mr. F. G. Stephens, of the 'Athenæum.'

might say his next-door neighbour—should not be aware of his service or his existence?

'Yours very faithfully,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

The treatment he experienced from the Fine Arts Commission continued to exercise its depressing influence on his spirits, and he thus writes to his friend on seeing the printed Report of the Commissioners:—

'August 8, 1864.

'My dear Forster,—I return you my best thanks for your hearty note, which came with the Report. . . I am annoyed that, inasmuch as I never made the slightest efforts for an increase of payment, and did not even claim the sums due to me, lest it should interfere with the sum available for other artists, yet I find I am not signalised in any way, and I feel myself included in a kind of rebuke in the last paragraph of the Report. . . "The Commissioners desire to express their strong conviction that it is for the true interest and honour of artists, as well as due to public economy, that in future there shall be no subsequent departure from the provisions of any contract which has been deliberately agreed upon. It is for the artist, before he enters upon such an engagement, well to consider how far the renown which accompanies a successful work in a national monument or building, affords an adequate compensation for any pecuniary loss he may apprehend with

regard to his private practice." I have said how little the first part of this warning paragraph is applicable to me; and as for the latter part I have been almost ashamed to confess to myself that I had no other idea in carrying on this labour than the poor hope of doing something worthy, and its consequent excitement. Well! enough of this; I can only look forward when I throw this last work off my mind to resume my old habits, and try whether my energies will still suffice to fill the old clothes respectably. I remain, ever faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

He had but just finished his grand fresco, 'The Death of Nelson,' when domestic sorrow began to blend itself with professional disappointment. His unmarried sister (Isabella) was seized with a mortal illness; they had ever been very much attached to each other. His younger sister (Mrs. Banks) left him on her marriage, some twenty-five years before; Isabella then remained the sole companion of his home, and ministered to his comforts with an unwearied spirit of tenderness and affection. When she was first attacked with the disease which terminated in her death, he could not part with the hope that it would not prove fatal, and in his conversations with Mrs. Banks he always expressed his belief in her ultimate recovery. Mrs. S. C. Hall, whose works on Ireland will remain a lasting record of her genius,

and her love of the land that is so proud to claim her as its own, was one of his earliest and most ardent friends.

The connection of Mr. and Mrs. Hall with literature and the arts, rendered their friendship of great consequence to Maclise in the commencement of his career; he remembered their kindness and maintained affectionate relations with them to the last. The following note was written to Mrs. Hall in reply to an invitation from that lady. It indicates how deeply he felt his sister's condition :—

'4 Cheyne Walk, S.W., January 14, 1865.

'My dear Mrs. Hall,—I am living at Brighton, in charge of an invalid sister, and this fact is accepted by my friends in excuse of my not accepting many kind invitations. Therefore, if I should not appear on the 27th, you will know the reason thereof. That idea of the late Premier, when he accounts for the discontent of the Irishman thus—that he inhabits a damp climate, has no amusement, and lives contiguous to a melancholy ocean—is precisely my case; but, in addition, *I* have *another woe, much more true and nearer home.*

'Believe me, as ever, very faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

His sister died in April 1865. He had himself at this period betrayed symptoms of impaired health. His robust and iron frame had been exposed to a

most trying ordeal. During eight years he almost constantly lived in that 'gloomy hall' (as he termed it) at Westminster Palace, inhaling an atmosphere to some extent tainted with the poisonous pigments used in fresco-painting, and enduring the alternations of oppressive heat in summer, and the fogs and damps of winter. He was accustomed to leave Chelsea every morning about ten o'clock, and remain in the Royal Gallery until the fading daylight brought him a short respite from his labours.

He accepted no commissions during the years 1864 and 1865, although his correspondence affords evidence that he was requested to undertake several works.

In his communications with the late Prince Consort during the progress of the fresco of 'Wellington and Blucher,' he frequently expressed to His Royal Highness his fears as to the effect which the stained-glass windows would produce on the picture. The Prince refers to this in one of his letters to Sir Charles Eastlake, and suggests how it may be neutralised.[1] The authorities of the Palace, however, made no effort to carry out the suggestion, and the anticipated effect fully manifested itself when the fresco was uncovered and exposed to the influence of the sun's rays streaming through the coloured glass. Maclise was disheartened at witnessing it, and thus writes to his friend, Mr. Stephens :—

[1] Supra, page 148.

'Royal Gallery, May 15.

'My dear Sir,—I have not yet seen your remarks on the use of modified hues in the stained windows, but I learn that it has been adopted in the corridors. As respects the hall, I assure you I am mortified in the last degree to see the effect I aimed at utterly falsified by the actual garish, heraldic hues of "gules" and "or" and azure besprent over this poor work of mine. There never was such an effect as I see it under sometimes when the sun is in full blaze at four o'clock. In addition to the colours shed over the picture, there are the shadows of the architectural forms of the windows and the chandeliers exquisitely traced on it. It is *then* a mere thing of emblazonry—of stains of kings and queens, and boars and griffins, and what not. I said in a joking way to Sir C. Eastlake on this subject, that although we have reverent ideas connected with the "storied pane," still it ought to be confined to the matter of telling its own story, and not, as in my case, be allowed to make commentaries, and annotations, and illustrations on mine. I say there never was hall so badly calculated for the exhibition of paintings; and I have had the acknowledgment from the architect of the building that he never intended the hall for the exhibition of anything but a gorgeous enrichment of matter more allied to the College of Arms than of Arts.

'Very truly yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.

'F. G. Stephens, Esq., &c.'

He again addresses Mr. Stephens, who had written an article on the subject in the 'Athenæum':—

'4 Cheyne Walk, S.W., November 7, 1864.

'My dear Sir,—I think the article in every way admirable, and it will be of great service in explaining what I intend in this very intricate performance of mine. I little thought when I was, I fear with some degree of fatigue, pointing out to you my intentions, how well you had already interpreted my meaning for yourself when you had favourably viewed, and reviewed, my cartoon. Now that the excitement of my work is abating, I confess to the despondency in which my colleague found me with my face to the wall. It seems to be in a kind of expiation of those pictorial escapades I had made in my youthful days; and I sigh to perform some penitential picture work; but this, I fear, will not now occur.

'I have also read with much pleasure your article on the scenes and designs, and thank you for your kindly estimate of them.

'Yours very faithfully,

'D. MACLISE.'

The injustice with which he was treated by the Fine Art Commissioners was well calculated to wound his feelings and depress his energies; on the other hand, he must have derived some satisfac-

tion from the sympathy of those whose prominent position in the art department of literature made it more than ordinarily acceptable. Intrepid and eloquent remonstrances, addressed to the Palace authorities, appeared in the columns of the 'Art Journal,' 'Athenæum,' &c., but without the slightest effect.

The President of the Royal Academy (Sir Charles L. Eastlake) died in 1865. The vacant chair was offered to Sir Edwin Landseer, who did not accept it. The Academicians then selected Maclise; but he, in turn, declined the honour. The position of president could confer no new dignity on him—his fame as an artist could not be increased by it, and his modest nature shrank from the correlative distinction, which the title is assumed to confer on the office. His devotion to art was disinterested, and unalloyed by any selfish consideration; he refused to divide his attentions, or falter in his allegiance to it; he was not impelled in its pursuit by the hope of any worldly distinction; he only sought what he obtained—supremacy in the art to which he was devoted, for the sake of the art itself. In addition to these reasons, he was, perhaps, not disposed to relinquish the habits of seclusion and solitude which had for some years been stealing over him, and which the death of his sister tended very much to confirm and intensify.

It will be scarcely believed by those who are not

acquainted with the fact, that the great picture of 'The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher' remained shut out from public view for nearly *four years* after it was finished. When it was permitted to emerge from dust and obscurity, the artist thus addresses Mr. Stephens:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, S.W., February 14, 1866.

'Dear Sir,—The hoarding has now been removed from the picture (Meeting of W. and B.), and it is laid bare to the criticism and challenge of all comers. You may think it right to state your opinion respecting the destruction of the best architectural feature in the Royal Gallery, viz., those really well-designed niches and their canopies, on which the late Sir Charles Barry, as I know, bestowed great care, so as to make them fit shrines for the proposed statues. You may see that one of these graceful constructions has been ruthlessly hacked from the wall, and all will be destroyed for the purpose of presenting in a colossal form the figures of our recent kings, projecting them in the manner so much objected to in St. Stephen's Hall. As it would appear—and in a kind of cruelty—the son of the architect has been selected to commit this unfilial and unfortunate act; by whose authority I know not—whether that of the Lord Chamberlain or the Board of Works—but it certainly is a matter worth inquiring into.

'Most truly yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

He again, in reference to some observations in the 'Athenæum,' writes to Mr. Stephens:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea.

'Dear Sir,—My brother has frequently said that possibly I may have shed over those paintings too strong a libation of the glass water; although the exact degrees were given me by an eminent chemist in Berlin. This too strong dose, therefore, would *too* well protect the work, while it might mar its effect in another way. That kind of efflorescence or bloom, shall I call it, that occurs on the surface of every kind of glass, has appeared in parts of the first picture, as you may have seen. A great authority—Dr. Hoffman—told me that such is only a proof of its indelibility. I confess I received the news with little satisfaction. But even if this kind of chill were uniform, I do not think it would degrade the work. Much worse happens in those appliances of old brown varnishes and oil glazes in which the latest generations believed, and lingering still, still vitiates, I think, the general taste. But to recur to an old grievance; what method of painting could bear up against the climate of that hall? Long drippings of moisture fall over the surface of the paintings at one time, and at another a full focus of blazing sunshine from eight emblazoned windows falls upon them. One day you will find the hall reeking with the damps of a thousand wet cloaks and umbrellas, and the next it is subjected to the dust raised by the

public from the old mouldy staircase; or, worst of all, the place is a perfect carpenter's shop for the erection, periodically, of wainscoting for the exhibition of architectural designs and apparatus for the heaving up of proposed statuary. "Royal Gallery!" I know the architect had much pride in it—Royal Lumber Room is a fitter name for it; and I say that the whole control of the place is an utter disgrace to the authorities. This is in great haste; but I am very faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.

'F. G. Stephens, Esq.'

In 1866 two pictures of his appeared in the Exhibition:—

1. 'Here Nelson fell.'

This was a study in oils of the great fresco he had finished at Westminster Palace [a description has been given *supra*].

2. 'Portrait of Doctor Quain.'

In 1867 he produced—

1. 'Othello, Desdemona, and Emilia.'

A composition of great power and manipulative skill. The beauty of Desdemona is very striking, and the expression of wistful anxiety on her features is true to nature. It was remarked by some art critics, that the grouping savoured too much of

the stage, and that the colouring had a metallic effect; but it is a charming picture.

2. 'A Winter Night's Tale' (King Richard II.).

The subject of this is also selected from Shakespeare—

> 'In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire,
> With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales.'

The picture represents a cottager's fireside, round which, on a winter's night, tales are being told to a circle of attentive listeners. Maclise was unsurpassed in a certain kind of realism, and this work is a clever example of it.

I received the following note from him this year, in London:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W., Friday.

'My dear O'Driscoll,—How very glad I am to find that you are in London. Whenever I see your handwriting my thoughts irresistibly turn to the days that have been, and recollections of our rural ramblings by wood and river, come back to me as freshly and vividly as ever. I am not well; and should very much like to see you. Is there any reason why we should not pass a day together somewhere—anywhere—in the country? Perhaps we might fancy ourselves once again strolling along by "the pleasant waters of the river Lee." If, then, you are not unwilling, to-morrow would suit me exactly. I will call for you at 12.30. Is that a convenient hour?

If so, don't reply. We can come back and dine here.

'Yours, as ever, faithfully,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

We went to Hampton Court and through the Palace. We looked at some of West's pictures. Maclise was no worshipper of West; he said there were several Academicians of the present day, some of whom he named, immeasurably superior to him. 'Herbert's "Moses,"' said he, 'is in my mind worth all that West ever produced, and yet the nation gives grudgingly, a most inadequate price to the painter of such a picture, the result of many years of toil, whilst West received, it is said, not less than 34,000*l.* from George III. for the works he executed for the king.'

His niece (Miss Banks) displayed at a very early age a kind of hereditary love of the art, and a wonderful facility in drawing. Maclise, not, perhaps, displeased to find that her predilections lay in a direction that could be developed by his guidance and advice, encouraged her artistic leanings. A close application to the fascinating pursuit, rather as an amusement than as the business of her life, gave her such proficiency with the pencil, that in a very short time she commenced the use of canvas and colours. One of her first efforts in oil-painting, and his affectionate criticism on it, produced the following letter,

so characteristic of his tolerant and gentle disposition:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.

'My dear Rhoda,—You saw how distressed I was when you took my remarks more to heart than they deserved. But I wish you to believe that it is always with *myself* I am dissatisfied when being pleased with or disliking any work submitted to me. I feel unable to demonstrate why it is good or bad. Between the best possible painted head and the worst, any *competent* person can at once *see* the difference, but to argue upon it, has never yet been accomplished with any effect. I advise you to adhere closely to the model before you, whatever it may be, and not attempt to idealize upon it; at the same time, you must not caricature it. If you spent many sittings in painting an eye to perfection, it is worth the trouble; but a whole figure rapidly done is worse than nothing. In these days of photography and *P.R.B.-ism*[1] exceeding detail may be overestimated; yet, for a student, attention to detail has ever been considered essential, and even great masters, when they forget nature, have incurred the penalties of desertion from her service. I am for ever in the groove between Chelsea and Westminster. My dear Rhoda, yours faithfully,

'D. MACLISE.'

[1] 'Pre-Raphael-Brotherism.'

He continued to watch her progress with affectionate interest, and to give his opinions and advice. She had made two rough studies of a composition in oils, and wished him to say which he thought best, and to make any suggestions, as to design and colouring, that occurred to him. He thus writes:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.

'My dear Rhoda,—I thought the little head in the hat the better of the two. With respect to the other one, you may paint the blue dress; but I advise that it be mitigated by some other colour, such as *red*, in lining or trimming, otherwise the picture will be one all "black and blue." The background is too dark, and solid, and uniform—there is no play of light or shade; even if a young lady stood at the entrance of a cave "where no daylight enters," it could not be without *some* variation. The blossoms are too much *cut out*, and have not sufficient variation, such as clusters would give them; and they are not clust'rous enough, they look scant; some of them are very neatly executed. Why not vary the background something like what this imperfectly indicates?

'This is all that a wretched cold will allow me to write just now, except that

'I am ever faithfully yours, 'DAN.'

When Miss Banks acquired adequate proficiency, she was in the habit of making sketches, which he adopted in the backgrounds and details of his pictures. I transcribe one of his notes to her on the subject:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.

'My dear Rhoda,—I had no notion there would be any difficulty in procuring a branch of oak. Do not copy such spots as in the specimen, except, perhaps, one or two bits of decayed foliage (if you like); but any autumnal colour you find on the leaves you may imitate. The construction of the oak-leaf is not very elaborate in its ribbings, so you will find you do more in a day than you can imagine; and for this reason you will, I think, be able to paint for my use some palmated chestnut leaves before they "go out of town for the season." Manage to take some different views of the leaves, but except you see it in the study before you it would not be well to do more than one or two (and these will not take much time) of such views, as the profile, like this [here he gives on the page a diagram of what he means], or from point to stem, like this (diagram), or, still more simple, the chief views may be such as these (diagrams).

'Faithfully yours, 'DAN.'

He again writes to her, in reference to an oil painting (portrait of a lady) that she had copied for him:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, S.W.

'Very good indeed, my dear Rhoda. The little faults arise from your *too* faithfully imitating the discolorations of the original. In *that* original you might introduce a pair of lace cuffs to relieve the

wrists from the pair of *hand-cuffs* which now appear on them.

'Ever affectionately yours, 'DAN.' [1]

I wrote to him, saying I had found a copy of the original edition of Hogarth's 'Analysis of Beauty,' published by the author in 1753, and that it would be perhaps interesting to him, as it contained, in the appendix, a list of all Hogarth's engravings, prepared by himself, and the prices at which he had published them; and I said I would send it to him if he had not, already, a copy. He thus replied: —

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.,
'January 3, 1868.

'My dear O'Driscoll,—I am very glad to see your handwriting, and, if I do not rob you of a very valuable work, I accept your offer of the "Analysis of Beauty," and I shall receive it as a memento, and

[1] Before his death he had the great satisfaction of seeing Miss Banks attain distinction in the art. She exhibited some of her works in the Royal Academy that were much admired. One of them appeared in the Exhibition of 1869, entitled, 'Reminiscence.'

'The smile that from the picture beams
Is mirrored in her face,
As a bright thought that moves the heart
Lends to the lips a grace.'

This picture was very much admired, and was sold on the wall of the exhibition-room for a considerable sum. It is but justice to the memory of Maclise, and to the talents of the young lady, to state that the assistance rendered to her was scrupulously limited to his suggestions and advice. He never touched one of her pictures; they were wholly executed by herself.

a New Year's gift. For myself, I am not well, and I vibrate 'twixt this place and Brighton, where I have a perpetual first floor, and, although in summer and autumn charming, it is now exactly like this place, looking on Thames, and even strongly reminding one of "Merchants' Quay" in that city yclept *beautiful*. . . .

'I quite long to go to Ireland once more, and try to see something of you, and also of this astounding *Fenianism* which I try not to believe in. I think you know how ill I am in even going to *Gravesend*, if not *Greenwich*; and the Irish Channel appears to me as the most material Repeal of the Union.

'Prospectively, I love to have the idea in my head, therefore who knows but I shall startle you, some day, by a visit, telling you of my advent.

'Ever faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

To my extreme mortification, I discovered, on looking over the book, that several of the illustrations and diagrams of Hogarth had been torn out. I sent the book, however, expressing my regret that it was imperfect. He wrote to me as follows:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.
'January 11, 1868.

'My dear O'Driscoll,—The book came here as soon as your note, and I thank you for both very much. What a small rogue that must have been who cut

away with the illustrations and diagrams, for most certainly the painter "who reached the noblest point of art" (as Garrick said—I think it was Garrick—and I have read it very often on Hogarth's tomb in Chiswick's pleasant little Thames-side churchyard) did not, in literature, attain an altitude so high. I am, as you know, rather heretic as to his transcendent merits as artist; yet his *pencil* is far better than his *pen*, and the *last* actually requires the comment of the *first*. I have myself certain bookcases that I may call a library, and certain books of prints, &c., &c. Well! I hardly ever fail to find something missing when I require it. There seems to be some especial demon devoted to the destruction of the integrity of books and prints, and except you can bring the crime home to the *spiders*, no one is ever found out. You interested me very much in your account of a short visit to that city called "The Beautiful," and I conjure up visions of Marcel and Sainthill, La Roche and "the Son of Ivor." I was there myself some years ago, and although I yearned to see my old friends once again, I was so ill that I was in terror of being known, and wished for quiet; so I put my name down at the "Imperial" as ——, an artist and friend of mine. I felt it necessary to adopt an artistic name because I betrayed myself rather in that old custom-house now devoted to a department of science and art, and they sent to *that* name at the hotel piles of "Blue Books," which, had

they been mutilated, I should not, perhaps, have greatly grieved. But "no more of this." I shall go (D.V.) to Edinburgh next summer, and I have accepted a temptation to Arran. Who knows but I may go over to Donaghadee from the port of the Patron Saint, careless of the great attractions of the four boats (which I hope have figure-heads that worthily personify the provinces), and see you.

'Believe me ever faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

The decorations of the Palace at Westminster having been the subject of an animated debate in the House of Commons, Mr. Forster, the ardent friend of the artist, addressed a letter to one of the members, who took a prominent part in the discussion. It is a lucid *résumé* of the proceedings of the Royal Commissioners, and their injustice to Maclise:—

'Palace Gate House, Kensington,
'May 11, 1868.

'Dear Mr. ——,—I think it was understood that I should attempt to tell you briefly, yet, if possible, intelligibly, what Maclise's grievance is. At the special request of the late Prince, he undertook the subjects in the Royal Gallery—that was in 1857. He gave up all other commissions, and the Reports of the Committee of Fine Arts show how he devoted himself to the work, and the way in which his ser-

vices were acknowledged. The time and labour exacted proved to be far in excess of the calculation previously made of it; but to the contract made *he* adhered, and never thought of claiming anything beyond. While, also, every other artist, I believe without exception, had received payments in advance of their work, and some to an extent that they had hardly any hope of redeeming, Maclise alone steadily declined to make any application for payment excepting for work actually done. Great stir had been going on meanwhile with others who thought themselves at a disadvantage by the contracts they had entered into, and the result, upon reference to a committee, of which Layard, Eastlake, and others were members, was, that the rate of payment was raised for all, additional sums being given on the back works as well as on those in hand. Here comes one of Maclise's causes of complaint. He was paid the increased sum on the "Nelson" fresco; but the addition on the "Wellington," though promised last year in an official communication, has not yet been paid, though all the other artists have received their additions. It is possible, I think, however, that this year's estimates may contain it. A further cause of complaint is, that he made a scheme, which was highly approved, for the decoration of the gallery entrusted to him, and executed three completed oil designs at the request of the Commissioners—"Elizabeth at Tilbury," "Blake at Tunis," and "Marlborough

at Blenheim"—for which he has had no remuneration whatever. The truth seems to be, that what with the Prince's death, and all the botheration and outlay consequent on the dissatisfaction (in some cases, perhaps, the not very satisfactory work) of the artists themselves, the old grand plans for adornment of the Houses seem to have cooled down wonderfully, and eager opportunity has been taken, as far as possible, to get rid of them altogether—most certainly, in this case of Maclise, not only without discrimination or fairness, but with real and great injustice. "It may have been," he says himself, "right that the engagements of other artists should be cancelled on the ground of claiming larger sums; but, as I made no such claim, why has my commission been also cancelled? And why have not my three designs been paid for, when, as stated in the report of the Commission appointed to reconsider the payments, Mr. Herbert has received 1,800*l.* for three small designs, as an instalment on work which he may never execute?"[1]

'Forgive my troubling you thus much, and

'Believe me very sincerely yours,

'JOHN FORSTER.'

[1] The increased sum for the 'Wellington and Blucher' fresco *has never been paid*, and no payment has been made for the three oil designs above mentioned, although they were officially approved of, and adopted, by the Commissioners.

CHAPTER XIII.

Pictures exhibited by Maclise in 1868-9:—'The Sleep of Duncan;' 'Madeleine after Prayer;' 'King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid'—Letter to Miss Banks, asking her to sit for the figure of the Beggar Maid—Letters to Mr. Wardell—1870, his last great work, 'The Earls of Desmond and Ormond'—Description of the picture—List of the works of Maclise not exhibited—Letter of Mr. Ayrton to Maclise—His health begins to fail—His habits of seclusion—Letter to the 'Times' by the artist—Serious attack of acute pneumonia—It runs a rapid course—His death—He is buried in Kensal Green—Dinner of the Royal Academy—Dickens's eulogy on the artist—Letter of Dickens to the author—Description of Maclise's person—Concluding observations.

1868. THIS year he exhibited two pictures:

1. 'The Sleep of Duncan' (from 'Macbeth').

The figure of Duncan is supremely grand, and the lights and shadows managed with great power.

2. 'Madeleine after Prayer.'

This beautiful picture tells the story of St. Agnes's Eve. The form of Madeleine is graceful and very lovely.

In 1869, one charming picture appeared in the exhibition:

'King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid.'

> When King Cophetua lov'd the Beggar Maide.
>
> *Romeo and Juliet*, Act ii., Scene 1.

Is there not a ballad, boy, of the King and Beggar?
Love's Labour Lost.

He that did lover's looks disdaine,
To do the same was glad and faine,
Or else he would himself have slain,
In story as we read.

. . . . . .

He saw her pass in modest grace,
Whiles in his tent he lay.

The story in the ancient ballad is effectively told in the picture.

The warrior king is represented sitting indolently in his tent, surrounded by his reckless soldiers, who are engaged in their amusements and carousals. The girl, modest as she is beautiful, is passing near the tent, laden with cheap wares, when the King, attracted by her graceful appearance and transcendent charms, exclaims—

Fill me the cup—
She shall be Queen this Beggar Maide,
If she'll not say me nay.

Maclise did not commence this work until the month of January 1869, as will be seen by the following note, addressed to Miss Banks:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.,
'January 10, 1869.

'My dear Rhoda,—I understand you are coming into this quarter on Tuesday. Will you come direct *here*, not later than twelve o'clock, that I may try to paint from you my *Beggar Maide*.

'Very faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.'

The fidelity and minuteness of the details, so remarkable in all his pictures, are conspicuous in this—arms and armour, shrubs and flowers; and the colouring is rich and harmonious. This work was one of the gems of the exhibition.

When the 'Madeleine' appeared in 1868, Mr. Wardell—an eminent merchant in Dublin, who had purchased 'The Spirit of Chivalry'—expressed a desire to possess it, and wrote to Maclise on the subject; but the picture had been already disposed of. Mr. Wardell then commissioned him to execute a work, leaving the subject and the price to himself. He wrote the following letter in reply:—

'4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.,
'June 17, 1868.

'My dear Sir,—I am much gratified to learn that you like the picture of "Madeleine." I have been engaged for some short time on a subject that will have one female figure, but there must be four or five men introduced: this last, and the necessity of the picture being something like six feet by four, might not, perhaps, deter you from adopting it a year hence, if I can go on and prosper with it. I have received the work of Gerald Fitzgibbon with many thanks, and look forward to its perusal with much pleasure.

'I remain very faithfully yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.

'To John Wardell, Esq.'

In reply to a request of Mr. Wardell that he would describe the picture referred to in his note of June 17, he writes the following:—

'My dear Sir,—The picture I have on my easel is one I have long wished to paint—"King Cophetua—Cophueta—and the Beggar Maid"—see Old Ballad and Tennyson; but I choose to invent the scene, and figure to myself a young king, with a few retainers grouped about him, under a tent, and *he*, seeing *her* pass by, loves her—weds her (as I hope). It may be completed in April next year, for the first Exhibition, which we expect will take place in the New R. A., Burlington House, and our centenary of existence.

'I shall dally with it, and care not to paint anything else in this year; but you shall only take the picture—if, indeed, you think of it—on the express condition of your admiring it.

'I am living at Brighton, in charge of my sister and two nieces, for a month or so; but I grieve to say, in spite of sea and sunsets, my old habits lead me to shut out both, and convert "an eligible drawing-room facing the sea" into an *atelier*.

'Believe me truly yours,

'DANIEL MACLISE.

'To John Wardell, Esq.'

Mr. Wardell purchased the picture, and it was transmitted to Dublin, with a note from Maclise, in which he says:—'I assure you that my satisfaction

is complete in thinking that, amid all the agitations of disestablishment and disendowment, Ireland can still give heed to the claims of art.'

His great work (the last he ever painted), 'The Earls of Desmond and Ormond,' appeared in the Exhibition of 1870. It is thus described by Maclise in the catalogue of the Royal Academy :—

'Battles, as a matter of course, were fought to settle the litigated questions, which, however they may have carried defeat or victory, never brought conviction. It was in one of these *mêlées* that Desmond, being wounded and taken prisoner, was borne from the field by some of Ormond's men, who made a litter for the purpose, which they slung across their shoulders. "Where now," asked the victors, "is the great Earl of Desmond?" "In his proper place," retorted the Geraldine, witty as he was wild; "on the necks of the Butlers!"'

In addition to his exhibited works, he painted the following pictures from 1830 to 1870, a list of which is before me in his own handwriting :—Portraits of his Father and Mother, of his Brothers and Sisters (four); 'The Sleeping Page;' 'The Hypochondriac;' 'Two Girls Dancing;' 'Boy and Hobby-horse' (Dillon Croker); 'Portrait of Colonel Jervis;' 'Portrait of Mrs. Lanford;' 'Portrait of Cook' (Banister); 'Portrait of Mrs. Snell;' 'Page with a Letter;' 'The Wild Huntsman;' 'A Girl bearing Peaches;' 'Lady Singing to a Guitar;' 'A Pensive Thought;'

'Group of Indian Lovers' (and another group, both done for Lady Blessington); 'A Girl with a Carrier Pigeon' (for Lady Blessington); 'Pan and Dancing Fairies;' 'Combat of Two Knights' (for Lord Lytton); 'Sardanapalus and Myrrha' (for Lord Lansdowne); 'The Parting' (a knight in full armour and a lady); 'Return of the Knight;' 'Portrait of *Sir John Soane*;' '*Mrs. Norton* as a Muse;' 'Three Subjects from the Siege of Grenada;' 'Charles Sheridan in Armour;' 'Portraits of Charles Dickens' (two); 'A Country Girl;' 'Portraits of W. H. Ainsworth' (two); 'Lady Studying Music;' 'Virgin and Child in a Niche;' 'Bathers;' 'Babes in the Wood' (two copies); 'Lear and Cordelia;' 'Prospero and Miranda;' 'Phœbe and Silvius;' 'Youth and a Girl with Hawks;' 'Ariadne;' 'Claude Sketching;' 'Scotch Girl;' 'Robin Hood and King Richard' (two copies); 'Maid Marian;' 'Connemara Girl;' 'The Loving Cup;' 'Othello and Desdemona;' 'Portrait of Miss Thomas;' 'Rosalind and Celia;' 'Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn;' 'Bohemian Gypsies;' 'Choice of Hercules;' 'Salvator Rosa and the Cognoscenti;' with not less than three thousand studies and sketches.

From the period when the Fine Art Commissioners rescinded their agreements with the artists, and thus interrupted the progress of the wall-paintings, no effort was made by the Government to complete the decorations of the Palace at Westminster until the

beginning of the year 1870, when Mr. Ayrton, the Chief Commissioner of the Board of Works, took the matter in hand. Maclise was so depressed in health and spirits, and so wounded by the treatment he had received, that he was resolved not to enter into any new agreement, for that part of his original contract remaining unfinished. However, when he received a communication from Mr. Ayrton on the subject, he felt assured, that under that gentleman's control, a very different description of management would be adopted, and that he ought not to refuse his assistance, with other eminent artists, to the developement of Mr. Ayrton's propositions. He called at Whitehall, in pursuance of a message from Mr. Ayrton, but, in consequence of some error made in delivering it, he did not see that gentleman. He afterwards received the following letter:—

'Office of Works, Whitehall, April 6, 1870.

'My dear Sir,—I was much vexed that, in consequence of a misapprehension, I had not the pleasure of seeing you when you called; but I am glad to find that my secretary, Mr. Smith, explained to you the object I had in view—to substitute some form of true art of the highest character for the adornment of the walls of the Palace at Westminster, instead of what appeared to me the imperfect process of producing an indifferent copy of the original work. Before any further steps are taken, I am anxious to obtain a general concurrence of opinion of artists of

celebrity who, like yourself, have had experience of wall-painting, regarding the best method of adorning the walls. I have no prejudices in favour of any particular method. I only want the advantages and disadvantages of *every* method to be fairly balanced, and some plan to be agreed upon with such a weight of skilled opinion as will satisfy the public mind. I think this course is likely to lead to better results and to be more satisfactory to the artists themselves than the former plan. When I have made more progress I will invite you to a meeting.

'Faithfully yours,

'A. M. C. AYRTON.

'To D. Maclise, Esq., R.A.'

His health was still delicate; he could no longer enjoy his accustomed exercise; the slightest exertion was followed by extreme languor and weariness. He was suffering from a slight cough; but as this recurred regularly every winter from the period when he was first engaged on the wall-paintings at Westminster, and again disappeared in the month of April, it did not, previously, excite much alarm. His habits became even more solitary and sedentary than before; and this year the cough did not yield to the influence of returning spring. The favourite occupation of the artist was to sit at the window of his house in Cheyne Walk, with his pencil and sketch-book. The window commanded

a view of the wharf at Chelsea, and he made its abominations the subject of the following letter to the 'Times' newspaper:—

'A VOICE FROM CHEYNE WALK.

'*To the Editor of the "Times."*'

'Sir,—I write on behalf of many of my neighbours who are devoted to quiet pursuits in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea. We like the place, and foreigners like it, for I see them meandering in a *mal-du-pays* way opposite to my gateway, and thinking with sighs how badly it represents the Cours de la Reine and the Lung d'Arno. Yet they come here as the best reminder of what they have left, and they find elm-trees bordering the river, and a really grand expanse over Chelsea Reach to Battersea Park, crowned by the heights of Clapham and the Crystal Palace gleaming on the nearest Surrey hill.

'Yet what drawbacks there are to our otherwise pleasant situation! There is a free wharf opposite to us, and for ever come sailing and oaring in, even in the dead of night, with peculiar cries as they hoist or lower their masts, or do the same with their anchors, certain barges, called "billyboys," laden with every kind of material, from a brick to a balk of pine forty feet long. Masses of granite arrive here, from monoliths from Mull to what appear to me to be paving-stones of the same material. Three,

four, or five horses are necessary to pull these importations up an inclined plane from the river, and the horses are immersed before my eyes above their hocks in the coldest of winter days in the river, waiting for their burden, and they are daily maimed in their goaded endeavours to bring up their load. I have witnessed since I have resided here four horses drowned, to be borne away by means of an apparatus that is apparently designed for this particular purpose, as if it were a recognised necessity.

'The place I designate is one of such evil that the parish some two years ago tried to close up the dock, but they failed, and it is now, as a policeman assures me, the worst corner in all London for cruelty to animals, and a hotbed of every kind of crime, although its outer form appears only in the shape of a man leaning on a rail all day, and for ever smoking a short pipe.

'The phase of cruelty to animals I leave to that society which is supposed to deal with such matters; but what shall I say to the authorities who permit congregations of scoundrels, who converse in loud-mouthed phrases of the very vilest sort in the excitement of their games of pitch and toss? Clergymen are in the neighbourhood, but, although they somewhat importunately claim our subscriptions for purposes in which they have a nearer interest, they seem to ignore all our peculiar woes, or in a good, easy way they seem to consider the case hopeless.

'One word more. Every evening of our summer Sunday there arrives in this favoured locality a band of preachers and singers, male and female, who bray their sermons and howl their hymns to an auditory of mocking and smoking bargemen. The psalmody is set to such airs as "The harp that once through Tara's halls," and that other melody of "Oh! no, we never mention her." Well, in spite of the dictum of that divine who declared that he saw no reason why Satan should be in possession of all the best tunes, and seemed rather to favour the idea of "Scots wha hae" and "John Anderson, my Jo, John," as proper melodies for the service, I think these summer Sunday evening open-air celebrations by ignorant and conceited young men to most unwilling auditors should be placed under some wholesome control.

'While I write—9 o'clock, Sunday—the bargemen and others interfere, and there is a positive *émeute*. There is a great crowd, and I hear loud and wild voices dominant over the broken bass of the pious hobbledehoys.'

'To the right of me, to the left of me, far as the eye can reach, I see that wholesome recommendation carried into effect that you should wash your dirty linen at home. Every bit of background—excuse the professional term, for, as I said above, I must not call it garden—has its various lines sus-

pended from old pear tree to older brick wall, and flaunts and flutters in whatever sun there happens to be, its secret draperies of flannel and of cotton. These integuments, inflated by the river breeze, in some degree personify the wearer, but, as an art-student, certainly do not give me, as far as I have been taught, correct ideas of the human form in its most ideal proportion.

'In conclusion, I must tell you that everybody here, of course, keeps poultry, and a bantam on my right hand, whenever he chooses to do it, is sufficient in his small treble to wake up and irritate all the hoarser cadences of full-sized cocks who defy him, while, at the same time, not merely "ever and anon," but always, we have to endure the cackling proclamation of some hen, varied by an interjectional scream celebrating some event which no one cares to understand but themselves.

'Mr. Carlyle lives near, and, I suppose, suffering somewhat in his studies from the same kind of annoyances that I have enumerated, is said to have remarked with regard to this last peculiar nuisance something to this effect—"I have no objection to their hatching if they would only do it in peace and let me do the same." 'D. M.'

He now scarcely ever left his house, save to visit his sister. However, he was persuaded by his niece (Miss Banks) to accompany her to the Oxford and

Cambridge boat race, on April 6; he appeared languid and depressed. The slight cough still continued, yet nothing appeared to induce a belief that any danger was imminent. He did not again go abroad until the Friday following, which he passed with his sister at Fulham. On the next day he was seized with an attack of acute pneumonia, and it ran a rapid course. Doctors Murchison and Stewart, who had been for some time in occasional attendance on him, were at once called in. They resorted to every description of treatment that human skill and science could suggest; but all in vain—'the crystal was broken.' Although he felt the inevitable change stealing over him, his thoughts still turned to the art he loved so well. On the day before his death he attempted to retouch a little sketch, but the pencil dropped from his fingers. He continued to grow weaker, and nature refused to rally. As the congestion increased he appeared to suffer pain; but his fortitude and sweetness of temper lingered with him to the last moment, and he passed away, gently and almost imperceptibly, on the morning of April 25, 1870. He was buried in the cemetery at Kensal Green, in the same vault which holds the remains of his father, mother, brother, and sister. The Royal Academy would have attended in a body at his funeral, but, unhappily, the annual meeting and dinner had been long previously fixed for that day, and it was said that the arrangements could not be disturbed. A

few of the Academicians, however, would not be denied the melancholy privilege of following to the last resting-place all that was mortal of their distinguished brother in art. Amongst them were his old and valued friend S. A. Hart, R.A., W. P. Frith, R.A., R. Redgrave, R.A., J. Herbert, R.A., J. Horsely, R.A., — Durham, A.R.A., with Mr. Hepworth Dixon, and many others.

The annual dinner which took place afforded Mr. Dickens an opportunity of referring to his death in the following address: the most affectionate, graceful, and eloquent that ever was offered as a tribute to departed genius and sterling worth. After speaking of other matters, he thus proceeded:—

'I cannot forbear, before I resume my seat, adverting to a sad theme to which his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales made allusion, and to which the President referred with the eloquence of genuine feeling. Since I first entered the public lists, a very young man indeed, it has been my constant fortune to number among my nearest and dearest friends members of the Royal Academy who have been its grace and pride. They have so dropped from my side, one by one, that I already begin to feel like the Spanish monk of whom Wilkie tells, who had grown to believe that the only realities around him were the pictures which he loved, and that all the moving life he saw, or ever had seen, was a shadow and a dream. For many years I was one of the

two most intimate friends and most constant companions of the late Mr. Maclise. Of his genius in his chosen art I will venture to say nothing here, but of his prodigious fertility of mind, and wonderful wealth of intellect, I may confidently assert that they would have made him, if he had been so minded, at least as great a writer as he was a painter. The gentlest and most modest of men, the freest as to his generous appreciation of young aspirants, and the frankest and largest-hearted as to his peers, incapable of a sordid or ignoble thought, gallantly sustaining the true dignity of his vocation, without one grain of self-assertion, wholesomely natural at the last as at the first, "in wit a man, in simplicity a child," no artist, of whatsoever denomination, I make bold to say, ever went to his rest leaving a golden memory more pure from dross, or having devoted himself with a truer chivalry to the art-goddess whom he worshipped.'

The letter which appears in the Preface to this work would indicate a feeling in the illustrious moralist that his own premature fate was then foreshadowed to him. Even whilst pronouncing his beautiful eulogy on Maclise, death was hovering near himself; the curtain was about to fall and close for ever the drama of his own life—

> Art is long—and Time is fleeting,
> And our hearts, though stout and brave,
> Still like muffled drums are beating
> Funeral marches to the grave.

He followed his friend to the same bourne in June 1870.

In person Maclise had the advantage of a tall and commanding figure; he was six feet two inches in height, and his manly presence well represented his mental powers. In the prime of life he was an eminently handsome man. He had then a profusion of dark hair, which fell in glossy curls round a high and intellectual forehead. His eyes were large, and expressive of great intelligence. In disposition, he was ever generous and amiable. His talent was unobtrusive, and his tolerance of the faults of young students, was very remarkable. It was well known that those who sought admission to the schools of the Royal Academy anxiously watched for the period when it became his turn to act as Visiting Academician, that they might have the advantage of his friendly eye to examine their productions; he never forgot that the time had been when he, himself, had no friend but his pencil, no fortune but his genius.

He was distinguished for his ready recognition of merit, particularly when manifested by those who had risen, as it were, from the ranks; who, not having had the advantages of scholastic training, yet exhibited natural powers, and overcame by their zeal and enterprise many of those obstacles that lie in the path of self-educated men. Whilst other painters were incessant in their employment

of the human model, it was a matter of astonishment to his brother artists that Maclise so infrequently resorted to it; yet all his works are distinctively marked by characteristics of individual as well as general nature. The wall-paintings at Westminster Palace demonstrate his power of portraying abstract personification; and his charming illustrations of poetry and song vindicate his mastery in depicting idealized form. These were the results of sedulous study during his Academic training, and a singularly retentive memory. To the general attributes of a great painter he added a special one, which he may be said to have made his own—the power of producing in an unequalled degree those ingenious and attractive accessories which impart a striking effect to so many of his works. Art critics of undoubted acumen, have fixed upon this peculiarity, as a fault in several of his most famous pictures. It was objected that the excessive use of this wonderful gift had the effect of distracting attention for a moment from the central point of interest to which these details should have been subordinate. However this may be, it is most certain that the very works referred to, as illustrating the propriety of this opinion, have acquired, and are likely to retain, a high degree of popularity. No more graceful tribute of regard could have been offered to his memory, no stronger proof of admiration of his genius, than the purchase—by the President

and Council of the Royal Academy—of the magnificent cartoon of 'Wellington and Blucher.' It occupies a prominent place in one of their *ateliers*, and will serve as an exemplar to students of the consummate mastery of one who had preceded them in the curriculum which that institution provides.

The testimonial presented to him by his brother Academicians on the completion of that great work—the 'monumentum ære perennius,' of the artist—repels the idea of his having excited the jealousy of any. Even when he rose to the summit of his fame, he ever maintained the erect dignity of genius, and never filched a feather from another to adorn his own cap. His conversational powers, and extensive reading, made him a most agreeable companion, and he gathered round him, as by an Orphean charm, the most distinguished literary men of the age. Lord Lytton, Thomas Moore, Samuel Rogers, Ainsworth, Thackeray, and the great man who rendered such prompt justice to his memory, were on terms of cordial friendship with him.

An impression appears to have prevailed amongst some persons that the recollections of his earlier years had become distasteful to him; that he was disposed to forget

> The land that first cradled his fame,

—the City of his birth—and the friendships that had been once associated with them. The rapid acqui-

sition of fame and fortune will, in contracted minds, not infrequently, tend to extinguish every generous feeling that may have pre-existed; but that observation cannot be applied to Maclise. He had too much nobility of soul, too much warmth of heart, to render it possible. Here—for example—is a letter, written not long before his death, to Dr. MacEvers, a gentleman with whom he had not corresponded—and I believe had not seen—for over twenty years, a period sufficiently long to have served as an excuse for obliterating the memory of their former friendship, had he been influenced by the feelings attributed to him:—

'My dear MacEvers,—I have but to-day received your note, having been engaged all the month in the country, and I am off again after the sojourn here of but an hour or two. I am fresco painting, and if I could imagine you informed as to the necessities and conditions of such a process of art, I should have no fear of your understanding the extreme nature of my occupation. I fear, then, I may not be able to arrange a meeting during this visit of yours, but I beg of you to believe that I am flattered by your recollection of me, and that I refer to our old friendship with undiminished zest.

'Believe me very truly yours,

'D. MACLISE.'

The pursuit of fame superinduces privations, not easily understood by those unacquainted with the

exigencies of high art. The stern necessity for complete isolation, which frequently forces itself upon the artist, is a trying ordeal to one of genial temperament; yet, he cannot realise the objects of his ambition, otherwise than by severing himself from society, its attractions and enjoyments, and seeking that solitude, and seclusion, which leaves the mind unfettered dominion over its own conceptions. It is thus alone 'that the diamond quarries of genius are worked and brought to light;' these are the inexorable conditions that precede its best and brightest revealings. If, therefore, there were old friends of Maclise with whom he found it impracticable to retain the familiar relations of former times, they should attribute the circumstance to the reasons here suggested, and not to less amiable motives. This is not the place to discuss at greater length his merits as a painter. Some reviewers have, in his lifetime, been astute to discover faults in his best performances, and to comment on them with rather fastidious severity; but it is the true mission of unbiassed criticism not to shrink from exposing defects, wherever they may be deemed to exist. It may, sometimes, in the ardour of the moment, transcend its fair limits, but the interests of art should render us tolerant even of slight excesses. It is mainly through the influence of fearless and able criticism that progress, in almost every direction, has made such giant strides in the present age. The press of this country affords no shelter to mediocrity;

offering no venal adulation—inflicting no undeserved censure, it will accelerate the success or failure of the artist, as either appears to be his inevitable destiny. When the works of Maclise shall be viewed through the vista of time, the rigour of criticism will relax, and their distinctive excellences will stand revealed and appreciated. All true lovers of art will mourn his premature death—in the very vigour of life, when his genius had scarcely filled the circle of its capacities, —and when all that he had achieved presented a golden augury of the success of his future career. But the works he has left behind, will entitle him to an immortality of fame—will serve to enshrine his memory, for all time, in the records of art—and will plead with posterity against oblivion of his name.

NOTE.

Strange to say, 'The National Gallery of Ireland' does not contain a single picture by either Barry, Shee, Mulready, Danby, or Maclise. Ireland, at this moment, can boast of artists whose works would adorn the walls of any gallery in Europe—Catterson Smith, Richard A. Jones, Foley, &c., &c., and who have ably struggled on to distinction in the face of most repressing influences. The Government grant, a paltry pittance of 300*l.* a year, is expected to sustain the 'Royal Hibernian Academy,' as a National Institution for the development of art-genius in Ireland. A letter appeared in one of the Dublin daily papers, immediately after the death of Maclise, suggesting that his last picture, 'The Earls of Desmond and Ormond,' should be purchased for the 'National Gallery

of Ireland;' but the suggestion was ineffectual. It cannot be doubted, that if the collection referred to contained works of that character, by Irish artists—redolent (as the Desmond and Ormond picture is) of national associations—it would conduce more to the encouragement of Art in Ireland than pictures by ancient masters. Barry—no mean authority on such matters—has stated that many, of what are termed, works of the antique schools are simply 'indifferent copies of apocryphal originals.'

APPENDIX.

REPORT BY DANIEL MACLISE, Esq., R.A., ON THE 'WATER-GLASS' OR 'STEREOCHROME' METHOD OF PAINTING.

BEING required to describe the method of Stereochromy, and to state my opinion of that process as adapted for mural or monumental painting, I attempt the fulfilment of this duty the more willingly, now that my daily practical experience confirms me in the belief that this process can supply to the artist a ready means for realising some principal objects of his desire, which, hitherto, he could not equally attain even at the cost of much labour and anxiety. In order to explain by what conditions, and owing to what results, Stereochromy is to be regarded as better fitted for the execution of mural painting than fresco, it will be necessary to bring here under comparison the leading features of both processes so as to estimate fully their respective merits, chemically as well as artistically.

My attention was directed to the new art of Stereochromy, as successfully applied to mural decoration, at the time when, having completed my cartoon illustrative of the meeting of Wellington and Blucher on the field of Waterloo after the victory, I was about to engage in the task of reproducing the picture in fresco. In preparing to effect this, I became anxiously mindful of the many and various difficulties to be encountered, and these seemed almost sufficient to dissuade me from the undertaking. Of those difficulties, such as they

are, the fresco painter of modern times is painfully aware, and so likewise must have been the greatest masters of that ancient art—for it appears beyond question that the fresco process is now carried out in the same manner as it has ever been—the artist being confined within the limits of the applicability of very scant materials, and, while working with these, doubtful as to their effect, his aspiration subdued by the disheartening conviction that his art is the slave of his means; since, whatever be the style of subject to be treated in fresco, and however simple in its design it may appear, the obstacles to be overcome are still in such obstructive force as to be positively repellant to the artist. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that he ever inclines to adopt any other process. And, considering the nature of the subject which had been allotted to myself—a subject illustrative of an event within the memory of many, and witnessed by not a few to whom the veracity of details even in respect to the form, material, and colour of a buckle, a button, or a tassel, might seem so necessary to be observed that any error would be judged as a culpable anachronism—the reason will be very obvious why I despaired of being enabled to finish in fresco that particular subject above all others, and why I hailed, with no small amount of satisfaction, the stereochromic method, from the hopeful promises it held out.

The truthful delineation of a multiplicity of characteristic details[1] being necessarily required for my subject, and Stereochromy offering the ready practical means for expressing the qualities I wished, I was fortunate in being furnished with

[1] A very small portion of these details could only be painted on the fresh laid plaster each day in the old fresco process, and, therefore, in the progress of the work, would necessitate innumerable joinings of the plaster, and give rise to such complicated and minute cuttings, that it would not be possible to get a mason to execute them—while the ground for a painting in Stereochromy is laid all at once, and the work can be left and resumed at pleasure.

a copy of a publication on the nature of that art (translated and issued for private circulation by direction of His Royal Highness the Prince Consort), entitled 'On the Manufacture, Properties, and Application of Water-Glass (soluble alkaline silicate), including a Process of Stereochromic Painting, by Dr. John N. Von Fuchs.' On perusing this pamphlet with that fixed attention which accompanies an interested curiosity to know the value of a new discovery calculated to abridge the manual labour of the artist in respect to mural painting, I was destined to feel all the disappointment which one so little acquainted as myself with chemical facts and the nomenclature in which these truths are conveyed might reasonably have anticipated. Quartz, rock-crystal, flint, and the various species of sand were only known to me by their sensible properties, while the substance called water-glass, never having seen it, I could not comprehend the nature of. A flint in fluid form was to me a mystery, even though I was told on good authority it was a fact; and the fluidity of a flinty mass, as having been effected by combination with an alkali, such as potash, soda, or lime, appeared to me a state of such matter rendering it wholly unfit to effect the desiderata of fixity and indelibility for a painting on a wall. The state of watery glass, even while I was looking at it, was still no less a cause for wonder than the state of stony water seemed impossible. Nevertheless, thinking that (while the realisation of either state was in truth a triumph of the past mental labours of the philosopher) the purpose which water-glass was intended to serve might be effected in a very simple manner by any one. I, in that hope, prepared for my first essay in Stereochromy. Having procured a bottle of the concentrated water-glass and a tablet of unprepared milled board, which was to serve as a ground for the picture, the necessary pigments were severally mixed in a diluted solution of that liquor; and with them so dissolved I tried to paint a simple figure; when, almost from

the first, it became evident that the vehicle did not admit of being used in mixture with the colours in the manner of varnish or oil, because of its stiffening the brush, and, as it were, petrifying the contents of the palette before the painting could be accomplished even by the most rapid execution. The result, however, such as it was, left no doubt as to the efficiency of the fluid in respect to its binding and fixing properties; for the colours as laid on the tablet could not be expunged.

In the next experiment which I tried with the water-glass I resolved to test its assumed virtues in a mode that would more nearly resemble the conditions under which I would have to paint in the compartment in the Royal Gallery—as to the materials of lath, plaster, &c. On a small wooden frame, barred with laths, were spread two coatings of mortar, made with the ingredients recommended as proper for the fresco-works of the Palace at Westminster; over the first rough ground of mortar, when this had become thoroughly dry, an intonaco was spread, one-tenth of an inch in thickness, and consisting of sand and lime in the proportion of one of the latter to two of the former. On this finished superstratum appearing sufficiently dried and manifesting the requisite amount of absorbency, a figure was painted in colours mixed with water-glass in a state of much weaker solution than that which was first used; and the result proved that, while the fluid admitted of the painting being executed with more facility than in the former trial, yet this was at the expense of the fixing qualities; for the painting, on becoming quite dry, showed that only a few parts of it were set, while all the rest—the greater portion of it—allowed of being disturbed by touch, and the groundwork could be readily laid bare by a wet sponge. The appearance which this picture presented after the lapse of a few weeks was still less satisfactory; some portions of it seeming to be discoloured, and especially so where the surplus fluid had run down over the surface. An

attempt made to fix this painting by passing over its surface water-glass, diluted with two parts water, secured the greater portion of the picture; but after a short time an efflorescence appeared on the dark hues, which, however, was easily removable. But though this trial of the fixing qualities of the fluid did not quite answer expectation, it was reasonable to infer that the failure was due partly to its over-diluted state, and, perhaps, also to the ground not being absorbent enough, it having been smoothly trowelled. That these were the causes of failure the pamphlet, on reperusal of it, assured me; and I gathered from the circumstance that, while the concentrated water-glass did not admit of stereochromic application, the more diluted it was the more frequently its use in that state became necessary in order to ensure its desired effects. After making a considerable number of such experiments, with more or less success, I would have felt on the whole not very sanguine in regard to the promise held forth by the author of the stereochromic method, but that by the following remark he removed my doubts in some degree:—'Failures, owing perhaps to faulty manipulation, frequently caused it to be abandoned before it had been put to a fair test.' On this assurance I deferred any further trials until I could witness with what results the new method had been attended, if not in the city of its discovery, at least where its practice was said to be perfected—in the new museum at Berlin.

With this object in view, I visited Berlin in the autumn of last year, and there I had the opportunity of closely inspecting five large and otherwise notable subjects, painted in Stereochromy, by Kaulbach, his pupils Echter and Mehr, and with the assistance of others who were also executing in the same style a series of designs under the portico of the same museum. These works appeared to afford marked evidence of the success of the process—a sixth work to complete the series of the larger set is in contemplation; and for this the

cartoon is prepared, being at present in the hall of the new Pinacothetz at Munich, where I afterwards saw it. Between the larger compositions above mentioned there are colossal allegorical single figures, painted also in the new material, and owing their permanency to having been impregnated with water-glass. Of these works it may indeed safely be said that they form a series of the noblest embellishments of one of the grandest halls which architecture has as yet dedicated to the development of a kindred art; and here, too, is to be viewed in perfection how transcendently imposing are the results when the two arts are harmoniously combined.

On approaching these paintings to examine their (so to speak) structural qualities, I was much surprised at the excessive degree of surface-coarseness, and as I could not imagine how this condition was necessary to their general effect as works of art, I concluded that its object was to ensure an absorbent superficies for taking in the water-glass with which they had been imbued; and such was the answer made to my enquiries in this matter. This requirement of coarseness, for such an end, did not, however, at the time, appear to me feasible, and I have since ascertained experimentally that porosity of matter such as the plaster facing of a wall, does not result necessarily from coarse sand or gravel entering into its composition. Another quality, and one which seemed to me as a consequence of this ruggedness of surface, was intrusively observable—the washes of transparent colour which had been passed over the work, perhaps towards its completion, had become stagnant, as it were, in the interstices; and, the colouring matter being then precipitated, gave the unseemly appearance of dark spots between which the calcareous prominences stood out almost wholly bare, and imparted to the entire surface a fatiguing sameness of execution. In order to disguise this blemish to the work, recourse was had to what, in artistic phrase, is known by the the term hatching or handling; evi-

dences of which treatment were visible in all parts, but especially so in the shadowed ones. This treatment, however, was productive of an effect more pleasing than otherwise; it served the purpose for which glazing is adopted in oil-painting, and because of the colours having been laid on in long transparent lines, in agreeable conformity with the objects delineated beneath, the first laid lines of these became modified as by the fusion of tints observable in the rainbow—blue passing into purple, red into orange, and yellow into green. Another ill consequence of the roughness of the ground was the settlement of dust on the prominent points, and this so falsified the artist's intention as to appear incongruously light in shadows and *vice versâ*. The same causes of the same evil I had previously noted in all the old frescoes of Italy, the plaster surfaces of which are not uniform planes; and as these inequalities serve but as receptacles of the extraneous matter, this, from having been so long undisturbed, has incorporated itself with the substance of the plaster, to the great deterioration of the pictures. The works at present under notice displayed, however, in the greatest perfection, those qualities which are particularly expected from Stereochromy as serving for monumental painting—their indelibility was accomplished and their flatted non-reflecting surface secured.

Having become satisfied of the efficiency of the stereochromic method as practised by others, I availed myself of the opportunities of my situation at the time to try its effects under their guidance; and to this end I had prepared for me, by the kind offices of Baron von Olfers, Director of the Museum, a moderately rough plaster tablet, as he recommended for my purpose. All necessary colours and brushes being likewise supplied me, I painted a figure, using distilled water as the vehicle for the pigments. I should not omit to say that the tablet had been previously very slightly impregnated with water-glass diluted, and allowed to dry before I

commenced. This essay was made with no difficulty, notwithstanding that it was required to wet the ground frequently with water, as well by means of a large brush as by the sprinkler, an instrument constructed specially for this use, so as not to disturb the colours. I may, however, confess that, by too forcible an application of this sprinkler or syringe, some of my work was obliterated, and tear-like drops carried off with them some delicate pencillings. The object for executing the picture on a groundwork kept constantly moist is that of being able to match the tints uniformly, and likewise for giving to the colours a certain amount of adhesion; but, as instanced above, much caution is required in the use of the sprinkler, lest the force of its jet spoil the painting; and this risk is for the same reason liable to be incurred when the water-glass is being applied by that instrument. The picture having been completed under these observances, I had the satisfaction of hearing it pronounced as highly successful when its fixation was accomplished. It was begun and completed on the scaffolding or stage, in presence of the artists employed on the Kaulbach designs; and they gave me enthusiastically all needful information as to the process in which they themselves were engaged under the great portico of the Museum facing the Lust Garden. And as it is in this situation that the stereochromic paintings will be exposed to the atmosphere, *sub cælo*, they will soon be tried as to the degree of their weather-resisting stability. Should they be found proof in this respect, they will furnish a favourable contrast to the large frescoes situated immediately above them, and which were painted from the designs of Schinkel, the architect of the Museum, while Cornelius directed their execution.

Encouraged by the success of my effort in Stereochromy, I felt desirous of trying next whether or not a painting might be made with a like result on a smoother plaster; for in such case I would be decided as to adopting the new process for

performing my own projected work in the Palace of Westminster. On a groundwork of this kind I painted a figure with very great facility; but this trial having been made at Dresden, a want of the material necessary for fixing the colours obliged me to defer that operation.

In Munich, however, an opportunity for further experiment offered, and accordingly I got prepared on two small tiles a plaster ground such as is approved of for fresco, but with more sand, the surface being evenly grained by the method called 'floating.' The figures painted on these have been indelibly fixed, and the artists who seemed best conversant with Stereochromy (many disregarded both the process and the results) assured me that any remarkable coarseness of surface for the groundwork was by no means an indispensable condition for ensuring absorption of the water-glass. They stated, moreover, in plain disagreement with the recommendation of the discoverer of the new process, that it was on no account necessary to saturate the plaster-strata with that fluid in order to fix the painting, and that this object was sufficiently attainable by using the water-glass with judgment over the completed picture. In proof of the efficiency of this plan of operation, they pointed to the works so treated in our presence.

The information I received from his pupils was repeated confirmatively by Kaulbach himself, when I saw him afterwards in Munich, in all particulars, save that relating to the surface of the plaster-ground. This, he insisted, should present a considerable degree of roughness, and he used precisely the same expression quoted from him by Fuchs—'it should feel to the touch like a coarse rasp;' but in opposition to his opinion, the Director Zimmermann (Königl. Central-Gallerie, Munich), as well as Professor Dr. Pettenkofer and Professor Buchner, told me that such surface was not requisite for any *stereochromic* reason; and, as successful results of the smooth

style of painting in that process, they referred me to works before my eyes, and likewise to two just completed, on either side of a porch in the Garden of Liebig, which were at the time being fixed. A very rainy week ensued; but I found that these freshly-painted and exposed pictures were not in the least affected by the weather. The artist, L. Thirsch, said that any kind of ground as to qualities, rough and smooth, was admissible, according to the taste of the painter. A kind introduction from Schnorr procured for me this opportunity for gaining information; and Gruner, of Dresden, exerted himself kindly in my behalf. In the laboratory of Dr. Pettenkofer he showed me a specimen of the same kind of work, thereby strengthening my belief that porosity, which evidently is so requisite for sucking in the water-glass, may and does exist to a sufficient degree in such a plaster-surface as I consider is best suited for my purpose.

Recollecting that in the pamphlet of Dr. Fuchs he recommends that both layers of the plaster of the wall, previously to commencing the painting, should be impregnated with water-glass, and, after being so prepared, should be well dried, I took care to make enquiries whether these measures were absolutely necessary to the stability of the picture; any further than inasmuch as the firmness and integrity of the substrata must conduce to that end. The necessity for this saturation of the wall with water-glass, I was assured, was never felt; and the rule is, therefore, not followed. The plaster strata (consisting of pure quartz-sand and lime in union), such as are chosen for forming the groundwork for an ordinary fresco, are considered to be sound enough in themselves for the stereochromate painting. On this kind of ground I saw the artists in Berlin at work; they painted with colours mixed in distilled water as a vehicle. These colours, when become dry on the wall, I found to be readily disturbed by touch, their fixation being left to be effected by the water-

glass when the painting was finished. It is on this principle that the works of Kaulbach are rendered indelible; and that they will endure so the artists have every good reason to believe. As a triumph of Stereochromy over ordinary fresco painting, they assert that the works executed in the former method are indestructible either by fire or water; and as to their durability, specimens are referred to which have existed for twenty years without exhibiting one symptom of decay. For these reasons Kaulbach regrets that Stereochromy was not adopted in painting his designs (illustrating the history of modern German art) on the outer walls of the new Pinacotheck, as he feels that he might then have been able to exhibit graces which are now unattainable by any other means. These pictures are now much damaged.

The artists, desiring an opportunity for imparting to the old frescoes the virtues of the water-glass, propose to try this experiment on the comparatively modern one painted about 1833 by Neher and Kogel, representing the return of the Emperor Lewis from his victory over Frederic the Handsome of Austria, on the Isar Thor, now very much decayed. I am sure the experiment can only prove a success by first carefully restoring the crumbling ground; but this, as far as I could judge, will necessitate great interference with the painting.

One of the last observations made to me by Professor Pettenkofer (the eminent chemist, and pupil of Dr. Fuchs, who, dying, bespoke his interest in furthering a knowledge of the discovery) in praise of Stereochromy in itself bears cogent reason for the adoption of that process in preference to fresco; the picture, even after having been fixed, admits of being retouched, and carried out to any degree of finish which may be deemed desirable.

The *art* of Stereochromy being thus enthusiastically recommended for the adoption of the painter in preference to

that of fresco, and such recommendation being supported by actual proofs of its success in supplying him with a means he has hitherto been so much in need of, it cannot but follow that he should feel inquisitive about the *nature* of the process itself; even though, to satisfy this sentiment, he has to stoop from the region of fancy to the underlying domain of science.

From what information I have gathered by aid of books and conversation, I have formed the opinion that between the stereochromic and the ceramic arts there exists a close analogy; while the art of fresco is not assimilated to either, except in a very remote degree. The fixation of the pigments by water-glass, on a plaster wall, appears due to much the same circumstance as that whereby the fixity of colours on an article of pottery is effected. In both these operations it is owing to the presence of silica (quartz) in the materials of the ground-work that the painting can be rendered permanently indissoluble, and because this substance, being capable of fusion at a certain degree of temperature, involves, while cooling down to a state of solidity, the matter of the colours laid in contact with itself.

Without presuming to explain the process of Stereochromy more exactly than what my limited knowledge of the chemical facts will allow me, I would say that what the slab or other form of potter's clay is to the ceramic painter the plaster wall is to the stereochromic painter; in both materials the substance called silica exists, and this is painted upon directly where it lies at the surface. But while in the process of baking the article of pottery the silica in it becomes fused by heat, and at the time the pigments become incorporated with silica, and all together afterwards set fixedly on cooling, a similar result cannot be obtained for the stereochromic painting because of the inadmissiblity, or rather practical impossibility, of subjecting the wall to the influence of fire. If such were conveniently possible, the result would of course

be the same. It is therefore upon the happy discovery that silica, rendered soluble by boiling it with an alkali, such as potash, soda, or lime, can in that state be infused into the wall through its facial painting, and so render the latter fixed, that the art of Stereochromy mainly depends. This art is new to mural painting, but the chemical fact is of long standing. Soluble alkaline silicate (water-glass) is but ordinary glass in a different form. Both are compounds of the same materials, and in the same proportions, or very nearly so; and, in fact, the very plaster covering on which the painting is to be made and set is, in itself (as the chemist attests), a similar compound, but one in a different state. Quartz sand, which forms the base of the plaster, is silica; the alkali (soda, potash, or lime), in chemical union with quartz, represents glass; therefore the plaster, formed of quartz, sand, and lime, is of the same matter as glass, the only difference between them being due to a chemical union of the ingredients of the glass, while those of the plaster only hold together united by virtue of the common law of cohesive attraction. It would appear, therefore, that between the plaster and the soluble glass there subsists a natural appetency. The one is desired by the other; the plaster thirsts, and drinks into all its multitudinous pores its vitreous beverage. The similar matters cohere as things physically suited for union, and upon this fact the art of Stereochromy is based, and therefore will endure. The process of fresco-painting is conducted according to natural conditions of matter which are more evanescent, and consequently the artist's work is more liable to fall with the wreck of chance or time, as we find it does if not well cared for. The fixation of the pigments in fresco is simply due to the circumstance that the painter, in brushing his colours on the wet plaster, disturbs a certain portion of the lime, which, commingling with them, becomes, by union with the carbonic acid of the atmosphere, hardened into a superficial pellicle, and gives its

own consistency to them. This pellicle of painted carbonate of lime is non-absorbent; it becomes in time impenetrable even by simple water, and consequently must prove so against any fluid of greater consistency, such as the water-glass. Hence it seems reasonable to suppose that the application of Stereochromy to the preservation of ancient frescoes' is but little likely to have this effect, while, at the same time, by the careless use of the water-glass for such a purpose, a danger to the pictures is incurred, if that fluid be suffered to remain on the surface, since by exposure to atmospheric influence it decomposes and turns opaque. The same untoward effect will take place on the stereochromic surface if this, from being over-saturated with the water-glass, bears out the surplus quantity of that liquor.

Before concluding this brief notice of a subject which, from its importance to the artist, claims a very extended enquiry into, and a full recognition of, its deserts, I would add a few remarks in reference to the combinative action which, as I am informed, is understood to take place between the water-glass and the painted plaster of the wall. Upon the knowledge of this depends the confidence we may entertain that certain appearances should strike us as being of no greater moment than they deserve to be accounted.

The water-glass, on being absorbed by the plaster, is considered by some to undergo no chemical change, but simply to enter the porous mouths of microscopic canals by the law known as 'capillary attraction.' In these canals it undergoes a petrifaction or vitreous solidification; and in this manner imparts a greater density to the plaster, and coherency to the particles of pigment through which it primarily passes.

By others it is believed that the water-glass, after being absorbed, *does* suffer disintegration by reason of the silica having a greater affinity for lime than for either the soda or

the potash; and that, in giving up the latter, it unites with the lime of the plaster, forming a silicate of lime.

It matters not, however, which hypothesis is the more worthy of credit; for the result, in regard to the painted work, is the same; its fixation is accomplished by cementation with the plaster, though it is true that the pigments do not penetrate this as the water-glass does, but remain as a scum or pellicle on the surface. Of this fact I have satisfied myself by making sections of fresco, of stereochromic, and of ceramic paintings; and no doubt it happens by reason of the circumstance that the particles of pigment are severally of larger dimensions than the pores of the substratum will admit to enter them.

The pigments proper for stereochromic painting are of the same number and kind as those found admissible for fresco painting. Those which are of the *organic* class, whether animal or vegetable, are said to fade from decomposition when brought in contact with the lime of the plaster; but, for my part, I have found reason to believe that, in most instances, what is considered to be a fading of these colours is only due to a resumption of their original hues, such as they present to the eye when in their dry, powdered form. All colours whatever are rendered of richer, deeper tone by admixture with a vehicle, be this oil, varnish, or simple water; and when either of these fluids becomes dissipated by evaporation or otherwise, they assume a lighter, fainter tint, as is well-known to the fresco painter, but the oil or water-colour painter never sees the colour in its simple hue unsustained by, and without the enrichment of, oils and gums. However this may be, whether actual decomposition takes place or not by action of the lime on every kind of organic colour, it appears that the water-glass does not affect them in such wise to any appreciable extent, but, on the contrary, seems to impart to them a trans-

lucency not their own; it has the entrancing effect of the shower on the rose, dyeing its native hue of a deeper, richer tinge.

DANIEL MACLISE.

December 1859.

Herr Kaulbach had just completed a stereochromic painting of large dimensions, in the month of August last, in the cloisters of the Dominican monastery at Nuremberg. He recommended me to see it, as he had been trying some few novelties in the process of painting, as well as a new kind of ground. By the favour of the director, Baron von Aufsess, I had an opportunity of inspecting this picture. It has been executed on a ground of Portland cement and sand, such as is highly recommended by Professor Pettenkofer, of Munich. It is the only instance as yet in which this cement has been employed for this style of painting, if I except a trial I made with it myself; and I have reason to believe it would present some difficulty to the painter, in consequence of the dark nature of the plaster, which, especially when wet, might not be suitable for a subject requiring a light scale of colour; but for the work now noticed it appeared to answer very well, as the subject was one of gloom, and the light of the picture artificial.

The latest experiment I have made in Stereochromy has proved the most successful. The picture is painted on a tablet formed of laths crowned with three coatings of mortar; the two under coatings of lime and river sand consisted of 1 part lime to 3 of sand, the intonaco, 1-10th inch in thickness, of 1 part lime to 3 fine silicious sand, such as is used by the artists in the New Palace at Westminster. This upper stratum has been hand-floated somewhat roughly. My object had been to make this surface and the whole composition of

the tablet to resemble as closely as possible the large panel in the Royal Gallery, so that it might fairly serve in regard to the process, I shall have to adopt there. Before I commenced painting on it, I wetted it over with a solution of limewater, and while it was still wet I began the figure, finishing as I progressed, and, in half-an-hour, the ground having become dry, I could see the effect of the portion I had completed. I then again wetted an adjoining piece, and so on to the end. In the mode of working I found I could freely, carelessly, use a stiff hog-hair brush to re-wet what I had painted without risk of displacing the colour, or in any degree injuring what I had finished. In one spot I wished to restore the ground after I had coloured it, and it was with some difficulty, and only by frequent and forcible use of a stiff brush and a sponge, that I could remove the colour. When quite dry next day, a solution of water-glass was formed of two parts water and one of the concentrated liquor imported from Berlin, and this solution having been twice applied, the painting is now perfectly fixed. I have also remarked that in this case the water-glass for fixing the picture had been freely passed over it with a large flat water-colour brush; and I may further add that I have tried to use in its full force crimson-lake (said to be particularly perishable), and as yet it remains without any apparent deterioration. This specimen having been thinly painted, water freely used, and the ground rendered very absorbent, I note these three conditions to be principal among the causes of the success of the experiment.

Notes added after the Practice of Stereochromic Painting of a Year and a Half.

The extremely absorbent ground procured by rough plastering does not appear to be so essential as I first supposed for the imbibing and setting of the painting by the water-glass.

After the lapse of a year and a half, I do not find that the hardened surface of the plaster wall (carbonate of lime) prevents either the colours from being sucked instantly dry, or the water-glass from being imbibed, even where the wall is smoothest; the wall in question has been unfortunately prepared carelessly, and exhibits every variety of bad plastering. Discoloration is here and there very apparent over the whole surface of the wall, arising from unequal distribution of sand with the lime, but otherwise seems not to have any bad effect.

Tracing over a red or black paper on the wall can scarcely be effected when the plaster ground is rough; when smooth the line effected is clear, and can be very easily made by the stylus.

A ground of Portland cement, without any sand being mixed with it, is extremely absorbent, yet a painting on it is very difficult to fix, and when fixed appears many degrees darker than when first painted. The execution of the painting is rendered difficult in consequence of the wet colour being instantly sucked dry from the painting-brush. Painting fixed by water-glass can, if necessary for alteration, be painted on and fixed again.

The quality of 'impasto' (not now much in favour even in oil-painting, where the sustaining nature of the vehicle secures for it an unctuous charm) can hardly be reached, either in Fresco or Stereochromy. In both, if attempted by loading the pigment, it is apt to fall away, and at best looks only dry. If, however, the painter should deem the raised surface of the

impasto desirable, it would be safer to have it secured for him by the plasterer, when spreading the ground. It would appear to be a quality more allied to modelling than painting.

Solid painting is very easily attainable, or rather it can scarcely be avoided, for even transparent colour in Stereochromy assumes a somewhat opaque and solid appearance, and the 'luce di dentro' is not seen but in oil painting. However, some approach to this effect may be arrived at by keeping the white ground pure, and by endeavouring to finish the portion at one painting.

The granulated or ingrained surface, so popular in oil painting, achieved by passing transparent colour over a roughened ground, so as that the colour shall remain in the interstices, is attained very easily in Stereochromy.

Water-glass, if sprinkled profusely and frequently on the picture, will cause it to shine, and consequently darken it, giving also depth and lustre to the colours. Although the unreflecting or flatted appearance of the picture is deemed an essential requisite for mural painting, yet cases may be imagined when the shining surface would present no objection. In such case the picture should be painted of a lighter tone, so as to allow of the darkening glazing effect of the water-glass. If water-glass be applied to a fresco-painting it will have the same deepening effect, which will, perhaps, interfere with its use to prevent the decay of such works.

So general is the taste for the glossy surface that such quality alone will secure admiration, and gain for a picture the praise of fine colour, while the contemplation of works embrowned by repeated varnishings has in a certain degree vitiated public taste.

I notice that one of my early experiments in Stereochromy, which shines under too lavish a layer of water-glass, is always selected for praise in preference to another painted in the same hues but of flatted surface.

I notice when the wall is unequally prepared as to roughness and smoothness that the same quantity of water-glass applied to it will show a tendency to shine on the smoother portions only. If an uniform tint were required, and the plastering treated in an unequal way, such as having a smooth spot in an area of rougher trowelling, the uniformity of tint could not be effected, for the rough work looks darker because of the innumerable shadows in its interstices, and both surfaces will exhibit the above-named changes when the water-glass is applied.

The last experiment I have made has been to varnish with mastic varnish a figure painted and fixed in the stereochromic manner. This at least looks dark and rich enough.

There can be little doubt that the dry unshining surface which the painter seeks with such painstaking, both in Fresco and Stereochromy, is a source of distaste to the general public.

Glazing, a much-esteemed expedient of the painter in oil-colour, can be practised (but in less perfection) by the artist in what I may call the old and new Fresco styles. In the last, the transparent colour may be passed over that lying beneath, after ten minutes; but in the old style of Fresco it cannot well be practised until the close of each day's work. While in oil-painting it is not safe to try the process, in consequence of the under-ground not being sufficiently dry, for two or three days.

Stereochromy is the only method of painting truly described by the term water-colour or aquarelle, being produced by water alone as a vehicle for the colours. What we name water-colours are mixed with gum, honey, or other substance; while distemper painting is enriched by size. 'The true water-colour painting has the great advantage of being readily rendered indestructible by an after process, the application of water-glass, 'a soluble alkaline silicate.'

Barytes is a white pigment which I have made some experiments with, but I cannot see that it is in any degree preferable to white of zinc. When the plaster surface becomes so indurated as that it might not readily absorb the water-glass in the process of setting, recourse is sometimes had to rubbing the surface with pumice-stone or sand-paper. In doing so great care must be taken, for the sand in mixture with the lime is sometimes unequally distributed, and where small masses of the former predominate, they crumble, and the surface becomes broken and pitted. Colour applied to these spots will appear darker than the same tint applied to the undisturbed surface.

The surface of the plastered wall should be treated uniformly, or, if any variety of surface be admitted, it should be with an intention. For instance, a greater or lesser amount of roughness might be desirable for the better expression of the surface-objects. But all accidental varieties of plastering increase greatly the artist's difficulties, making it necessary for him to deal with each change of surface by a different method of pencilling. In the case of an uniform tint, say of sky, being wanted, the trowelling, or floating, as it is called, of the plasterer, should be all of the same uniform treatment. Any variation in the handling of the trowel, for instance, any circular motion of it, leaving a rough or smooth course, will be easily apparent through any amount of colour passed over it.

It has been objected to zinc white, the white used for Stereochromic painting, that it is deficient in body. It has not the solid qualities, indeed, of lime or white lead; but the artist soon learns to esteem it for the compensating qualities of delicacy and semi-transparency, exhibiting a very favourable contrast to the staring, arid character of lime when used as a pigment, and taking into consideration the dangerous nature of this latter. Zinc white, from its delicate nature,

allows the water-glass to penetrate through it to the wall, even when used in considerable quantities; but a thin treatment of this pigment, as well as of many others, seems to be, for the above reason, desirable; and this white (when used delicately over the warm white of the plastered wall, the mortar of which is tinged agreeably by its sand) bears well out, and shows a very agreeable texture. All colours should be tempered by distilled water to as nearly as possible of the same consistency, if only for the reason of receiving the fixing water-glass with the same facility. If one colour be laid on thickly and another transparently, this last will be the more readily set.

The ordinary fresco-ground is smoothly handled with an iron trowel. In getting this smoothness the lime is worked out to the surface, and so separated from the modifying qualities of the sand. The lime, therefore, acts readily on the colours, even from the ground, as well as from its more intimate admixture with them. Such a ground, if painted upon in the Stereochromic method, not having sufficient absorptive power, when the water-glass came to be applied, although the pellicle of colour would be set and hardened, yet as the water-glass would not readily be received through the colour into the wall, a great liability would be incurred of the colour falling off in flakes. For this reason the ground for water-glass painting is always more or less rough, and is worked by the mason, in the process called floating, with a wooden hand float.

My experiments made during the course of a year and a half have not altered or deteriorated in the slightest degree. Colours said to be objectionable have been applied to various surfaces of plaster, as well as to a piece of white marble, to glass, delf, mill-board, a piece of oak, deal, pipe-clay, and plaster of Paris. The colours have been laid on in their full force, again thinned with water, and then modified by white,

the water-glass applied, and all have been rendered indelible; some, such as the two last named, requiring only a more frequent application. Ivory black and French ultramarine and lake have been treated as successfully as the more admissible colours on all the above-named substances. As regards lake, its colour in Fresco or Stereochromy can never be richer than as we see it in powder, and it does not tell for much. There is a sort of colcothar much more intense than lake, as well as a rich deep burnt sienna, that amply supplies its place.

In inserting some portions of correspondence on the subject of the preceding report, I take this opportunity of expressing my acknowledgments to those scientific professors and artists in Germany who so readily and liberally assisted me in my researches during a visit to Berlin and Munich in autumn 1859 and subsequently, by answering my enquiries respecting various practical details.

I have forgotten to allude to the effect I was so pleased to witness in Berlin of the power of shedding, by means of the sprinkler, a spray of coloured water over any portion of the wall-painting where it might be deemed necessary. I made a few days since some very easy and pleasing changes in hues by this method, the colour of course being very much diluted, so as readily to pass through the very small perforations of the instrument. There is another remark to be made with regard to this instrument. I have said that if an ordinary syringe were provided with a mouth-piece perforated and constructed like those I purchased in Berlin, it would have the same effect. When I conjectured this, I thought the glass bulb, for the reception of the water or water-glass, which is affixed to the syringe and supplies it, might be dispensed with, and thereby lighten it and render its use less fatiguing. I find, however, that the fluid must be supplied to the present machine

in the way it is, for the necessary smallness of the apertures would prevent its imbibing the fluid, as in the manner of an ordinary syringe, from a detached receptacle, at least in sufficient quantity.

DANIEL MACLISE.

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